With best compliments
For dear Rashid Sandpoto.

Naveed Sandeelo
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The Fundamentals of Marxist-Leninist Philosophy

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ОСНОВЫ
МАРКСИСТСКО-ЛЕНИНСКОЙ ФИЛОСОФИИ

На английском языке

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PREFACE

We are living in a dynamic age, an age of social revolutions, of competition between two world systems, of movements for national liberation, an age of rapid progress in science and technology. Life places ever greater demands on our ideological beliefs, our philosophical culture and scientific thinking. All the more reason, then, for studying Marxist-Leninist philosophy.

Marxist philosophy—dialectical and historical materialism—came into being more than a hundred years ago. Evolved by Marx and Engels, it was further developed by Lenin in his analysis of the new period in history.

Dialectical and historical materialism is thus an integral part of Marxism-Leninism, its philosophical bed-rock. It is a creative, revolutionary doctrine, a doctrine that is constantly being enriched and tested by historical practice. It is opposed to any kind of dogmatism and constantly develops on the basis of generalisation of the experience recorded in world history and the achievements of the natural and social sciences.

The world communist movement gathers in all that is of value and significance in contemporary social development, in the revolutionary experience of the working class and of all anti-imperialist revolutionary forces. This experience and particularly the practice of communist construction in the USSR, and of socialist construction in other countries of socialism, is reflected in the theoretical works of the Communist parties, which carry a profound philosophical and sociological message.

جاوید بھو

INTRODUCTION

Chapter I

PHILOSOPHY, ITS SUBJECT-MATTER AND PLACE AMONG THE OTHER SCIENCES

Marxism-Leninism is a harmonious, integrated theory comprising dialectical and historical materialism, Marxist political economy and scientific communism. Its philosophical basis is dialectical and historical materialism.

The unity, the wholeness, and consistency of Marxism-Leninism, which are acknowledged even by its opponents, flow from its integral world outlook and method. Marxism-Leninism cannot be properly understood without a mastery of its philosophical basis.

The philosophy of Marxism-Leninism is a constantly developing theory. It has critically assimilated all that was best and most progressive in the centuries of development of philosophy. At the same time its emergence signified a qualitative leap, a revolutionary upheaval in philosophy. Evolved by Marx and Engels as the world outlook of the working class, whose historical mission is to build the new, classless communist society, Marxist philosophy not only gives a strictly scientific explanation of the world, but also serves as the theoretical instrument for its transformation.

In the present age of rapidly advancing scientific thought some people question philosophy's right to existence as an autonomous branch of scientific knowledge. These opponents of philosophy say that at one time, in the ancient world, philosophy was the science of sciences, but that the various specialised branches of scientific knowledge, astronomy, physics, chemistry, biology, history, sociology, ethics and so on, having evolved historically out of philosophy, broke away from it and began to develop independently. Philosophy supposedly found itself in the position of Shakespeare's King Lear, who in old age gave away his kingdom to his daughters and was then himself driven out into the street like a beggar. But this view is quite wrong with regard to scientific philosophy. The disassociation of philosophy from the specialised, or positive, sciences undoubtedly encouraged the formation of a *specific* subject-matter of philosophical inquiry. On the other hand, the development of the specialised sciences helped to identify certain problems of world outlook and methodology which they all share and which cannot be solved within the framework of specialised research.

What is the essence of nature? What is the relation between

consciousness and the external world, between the spiritual and the material, between the ideal and the real? What is man and what is his place in the world? Is he capable of knowing and transforming the world and, if so, how is it to be done? These and many other similar questions are of profound concern to all thinking people. From time immemorial men have experienced an ineradicable desire to find answers to these questions, which make up the content of philosophy.

Philosophy is a world outlook with its own specific content and form, a world outlook which offers theoretical grounds for its principles and conclusions. This is what distinguishes philosophy from an unscientific, religious world outlook, based on faith in the supernatural and reflecting reality in forms conjured up by the imagination and emotions.

A philosophical world outlook is a system of highly generalised theoretical views of the world, of nature, society and man. Philosophy seeks to work out, to substantiate the basic principles of a definite orientation in the social, political, scientific, moral, and aesthetic spheres of life.

Everybody forms his own particular view of the surrounding world, but this view often consists of no more than fragments of various contradictory ideas without any theoretical basis. Philosophy, on the other hand, is not merely the sum total but a *system* of ideas, opinions and conceptions of nature, society, man and his place in the world. It does not merely proclaim its principles and try to make people believe in them; it gives logical arguments for these principles.

By no means every theoretically substantiated world outlook is scientific in character. Its actual content may be scientific or unscientific or even anti-scientific. Only the world outlook that bases its conclusions on the findings of contemporary science, that uses scientific method in its thinking and leaves no room for various kinds of anti-scientific, mystical and religious views and superstitions may be considered scientific. Of course, the evolution of a scientific world outlook must be considered historically. For example, the world outlook of the French materialists of the 18th century was scientific in its view of nature, which besides a historically transient element contained something that proved to be historically intransient and was inherited by modern materialism. There were also scientific ideas and propositions in the great idealist philosophical systems (for example, in Descartes, Leibnitz, Kant, Fichte and Hegel) in the sense that they gave a true picture of real relationships and connections.

Dialectical and historical materialism is a scientific philosophical world outlook, which is based on the achievements of modern

science and progressive practical experience and constantly develops and enriches itself as they advance.

In order to obtain a better understanding of the subject-matter and significance of Marxist-Leninist philosophy, of what distinguishes it from previous philosophical thought, we must take a closer look at philosophy as a special form of cognition.

1. Development of the Concept of the Subject-Matter of Philosophy

The subject-matter of philosophy has changed historically in close connection with the development of all aspects of spiritual life of society, with the development of science and philosophical thought itself. The term "philosophy" was coined by the ancient Greeks. It is derived from the two Greek words: *phile*—loving, and *sophia*—wisdom. Thus, in the literal sense philosophy is love of wisdom. There is a legend that Pythagoras, the Greek mathematician, was the first person to describe himself as a philosopher. No man, he said, should overestimate his ability to attain wisdom, but love of wisdom was befitting to any rational being.

But explaining the derivation of a word is not enough to reveal the essence of the scientific concept which that word expresses.

Philosophy arose at the dawn of civilisation in ancient India, China and Egypt, but it first achieved classical form in ancient Greece.

The most ancient form of world outlook, which immediately preceded philosophy in history, was religion, or, to be more exact, mythology, an imagined reflection of reality which arose in the consciousness of primitive man, who thought there was spiritual life in surrounding nature. In mythology with its faith in imaginary spirits and gods, great importance was attached to questions of the origin and essence of the world. Philosophy grew out of the struggle against the myth-steeped religious consciousness as an attempt to furnish a rational explanation of the world.

The emergence of philosophy coincides historically with the beginnings of scientific knowledge, with the need for theoretical inquiry. In fact, philosophy was the first historical form of theoretical knowledge. Initially, philosophy tried to answer the questions that had already been posed by the religious-mythological view of the world. But philosophy had a different way of tackling these questions. It based itself on a theoretical analysis that was in accord with logic and practical experience.

The early Greek thinkers (Thales, Anaximenes, Anaximander,

Parmenides, Heraclitus and others) were mainly interested in understanding the origin of the diverse phenomena of nature. Natural philosophy (philosophical doctrine concerning nature) was the first historical form of philosophical thought.

As specialised scientific knowledge was accumulated and thinkers began to develop specific methods of inquiry, even in the ancient world, a process of differentiation of theoretical and applied knowledge occurred, and mathematics, medicine, astronomy, and other disciplines broke away and formed separate branches of knowledge. But as the range of problems studied by philosophy diminished there was a corresponding development, deepening and enrichment of the purely philosophical notions, and various philosophical theories and schools emerged. There arose such philosophical disciplines as *ontology*—the study of being, or the essence of all that exists; *epistemology*—the theory of knowledge; *logic*—the science of the forms of correct, that is to say, consistent, argued thinking; the *philosophy of history*; *ethics*; and *aesthetics*.

The age of the Renaissance, and particularly the 17th and 18th centuries, accelerated the process of differentiation. Mechanics, physics, chemistry, biology, jurisprudence, and political economy, became independent branches of scientific knowledge. This progressive division of labour in the sphere of scientific knowledge brought about a qualitative change in the role and place of philosophy in the system of knowledge, and its relationship to the specialised sciences. Philosophy was no longer able to devote itself to solving the special problems of mechanics, physics, astronomy, chemistry, biology, law, history, and so on. On the other hand it was equipped to deal with general scientific questions, with questions of world outlook, which are often implied in the work of the specialised sciences, but which cannot be solved within their terms of reference and by their specific methods.

We know from history that the interrelationships between philosophy and the specialised sciences have been extremely complex and contradictory.

Some philosophers created encyclopaedic philosophical systems designed to oppose the philosophy of nature to natural science, the philosophy of history to history as a science, or the philosophy of law to the science of law. These philosophers usually assumed that philosophy was able to go beyond the bounds of experience, to provide "transcendental" knowledge. Such illusions were exploded by the development of the specialised sciences, which proved that physical problems can be solved only by physics, chemical problems by chemistry, and so on.

At the same time the opposite tendency, to reduce philosophy to

the status of a specialised science, to ignore the most general problems of world outlook was to be observed in a number of philosophical doctrines. The successes of the specialised sciences, particularly mathematics and mechanics, prompted philosophers to study the methods by which these successes had been obtained, so that they could find out whether these methods could be used in philosophy.

The differentiation and specialisation of science demonstrated, however, that there are problems that cannot be solved within the frame of specialised knowledge, that some problems have to be dealt with by philosophy as well as by the sciences. In fact, such problems can be solved only by their joint efforts. There are also some specific philosophical problems that philosophy alone can solve, but even here a solution can be obtained only if philosophy relies on the sum total of the scientific data and advanced social practice available.

2. The Basic Question of Philosophy

No matter how diverse philosophical doctrines may be, they all, directly or indirectly, take as their theoretical point of departure the *question of the relationship of consciousness to being, of the spiritual to the material.* "The great basic question of all philosophy, especially of more recent philosophy, is that concerning the relation of thinking and being."[1]

The basic question of philosophy lies in the fundamental facts of our lives. Yes, there are material phenomena—physical or chemical phenomena, for example—but there are also spiritual, mental phenomena, such as consciousness and thought. This distinction between thinking and being enters into any act of human consciousness and behaviour. Every individual distinguishes himself from that which surrounds him and is aware of himself as something different from everything else. No matter what phenomenon we are considering, it can always be placed in the sphere of either the material (the objective) or the spiritual (the subjective). And yet, despite the differences between the objective and the subjective there is a definite connection between them which on closer inspection turns out to be a relation of dependence. The question then arises: What depends on what? Which is the cause, and which is the result? Or, to put it more generally, what may be considered

[1] F. Engels, "Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy", in: K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 3, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1970, p. 345.

primary and what secondary, the objective or the subjective, the material or the spiritual, the object or the subject?

So the question of the relationship between the spiritual and the material, between consciousness and being, between the subjective and the objective, is rooted in the basic factors of our lives. Material phenomena, natural bodies, physical and chemical processes exist, but there are also spiritual, mental phenomena, such as consciousness, thinking, and so on. This is why Engels calls the question of the relationship between the spiritual and the material the basic question of philosophy.

Among pre-Marxist thinkers the materialist philosopher Ludwig Feuerbach came nearest to a correct understanding of the meaning and significance of the basic philosophical question. Criticising the religious doctrine of the creation of the world by supernatural, spiritual forces, by God, Feuerbach put forward the opposite view, that the spiritual arises from the material. A consistently scientific solution to the basic question of philosophy was provided by Marxism, which did not confine itself to considering consciousness as a property of highly organised matter, but went on to investigate social consciousness, defining it as a reflection of social being, of the material life of society.

So the basic philosophical question is that of how the spiritual is related to the material, how consciousness is related to the objective world. "The answers which the philosophers gave to this question," wrote Engels, "split them into two great camps. Those who asserted the primacy of spirit to nature and, therefore, in the last instance, assumed world creation in some form or other ... comprised the camp of idealism. The others, who regarded nature as primary, belong to the various schools of materialism."[1]

All the diverse philosophical schools and trends ultimately adhere *either to materialism or to idealism.* This is why the relationship of the spiritual to the material is the *basic philosophical question.*

The question of the existence of laws of nature, and of social laws, also depends on which we acknowledge as having primacy: matter or spirit. As science has proved, these laws do not depend on human intervention, they exist outside and independently of man's consciousness. Recognition of the laws of nature and society presupposes recognition of the fact that the world exists independently of human consciousness. This is the stand taken by materialism. The idealists offer quite a different solution to this question. Some of them believe that the world with all its law-governed

[1] Ibid., p. 346.

phenomena is the incarnation of a supernatural world spirit. Others, proceeding from the recognition of the primacy of the spiritual in relation to the material, maintain that man is directly concerned only with the phenomena of his own consciousness and cannot recognise the existence of anything outside it. Denying the existence of the objective world and regarding objects as combinations of sensations and ideas, these philosophers also deny the objective, law-governed nature of phenomena. As they see it, the laws of nature and society, the causes of phenomena and processes discovered by science, express only the pattern of phenomena that exists in our consciousness.

Depending on how we answer the basic question of philosophy, we are bound to draw certain definite social conclusions concerning men's relationship to reality, the understanding of historical events, moral principles and so on. If, like the idealists, for example, we regard consciousness, spirit, as primary, as definitive, then we shall seek the source of social evils, which cause great suffering to the working people in class societies (oppression, poverty, wars and so on), not in the character of people's material life, not in the economic system of society, not in its class structure, but in people's consciousness, their errors and wickedness. Such a belief gives us no opportunity of determining the main directions in which social life changes.

Bourgeois philosophers today often attempt to prove that the basic question of philosophy does not exist at all, that it is an imaginary, invented problem. Some of them believe that the very distinction between the spiritual and the material is relative, if not purely verbal. Thus, in the view of the English philosopher Bertrand Russell it is not at all clear whether anything that is denoted by the terms "matter" and "spirit" actually exists. According to Russell, the spiritual and the material are merely logical constructs. But all the attempts to do away, in one way or another, with the basic philosophical question fall to the ground, because it is impossible to ignore the distinction between thinking and the object of thought (a physical process, for example), between sensation and that which is sensed, which is perceived by the eye, by the ear and so on. The notion of an object is one thing, but the object itself, existing independently of that notion, is quite another. This distinction between the spiritual and the material, the subjective and the objective is registered by the basic question of philosophy.

The basic question of philosophy has two aspects. The first aspect is the *question of the essence, the nature of the world*, and the second aspect is the *question of its knowability*.

Let us consider the first aspect. *Idealism*, as we have seen, pro-

ceeds from the assumption that the material is a product of the spiritual. *Materialism*, on the contrary, begins from the assumption that the spiritual is a product of the material. Both these views are of a *monistic* character, that is to say, they proceed from one definite principle. In one case the material is taken as primary and definitive; in the other, it is the spiritual that is primary. But there are some philosophical theories that proceed from both principles; these theories assume that the spiritual does not depend on the material, or the material on the spiritual. Such philosophical theories are called *dualistic*. In the final analysis they usually lean towards idealism. Some philosophers try to combine the propositions of idealism with those of materialism and vice versa. This philosophical position is known as *eclecticism*. Still others deny any adherence to either materialism or idealism and call themselves "realists". They recognise the existence of a reality independent of the cognising subject, but do not regard it as material. Analysis of such "realism" shows that this theory is either eclectic or idealist in character, that is to say, it attributes any reality independent of cognition to God, the absolute spirit, supernatural being, and so on.

Both materialism and idealism have travelled a long road of development and have many varieties.

The first historical form of materialism was the materialist philosophy of slave-owning society. This was a spontaneous, naive materialism, which was expressed in ancient Indian philosophy (the philosophical school of the *Charvaks*), and in its most developed form in ancient Greece (mainly the atomistic doctrine of Democritus and Epicurus). "The line of Democritus", Lenin noted, stands in contrast to the idealistic "line of Plato".

In the age of the emergence of capitalist society the bourgeoisie opposed the feudal religious-idealistic world outlook with a materialist interpretation of the world, which was most vividly expressed in the works of the English philosophers Francis Bacon and Thomas Hobbes, the Dutch philosopher Spinoza (17th century), and in the works of the French materialists of the 18th century, La Mettrie, Holbach, Helvetius and Diderot. In the 19th century this form of materialism was developed in the works of Ludwig Feuerbach.

The Russian revolutionary democrats of the 19th century, Herzen, Belinsky, Chernyshevsky and Dobrolyubov, were outstanding representatives of materialism.

The highest form of modern materialism is dialectical and historical materialism.

Among the varieties of idealism mention must first be made of *objective idealism* (Plato, Hegel and others), according to which the

spiritual exists outside and independently of the consciousness, independently of matter, nature, and also before it, as a kind of "world reason", "world will", or "unconscious world spirit", which supposedly determines all material processes.

In contrast to objective idealism, *subjective idealism* (Berkeley, Mach, Avenarius and others) asserts that the objects which we can see, touch and smell do not exist independently of our sensory perceptions and are merely combinations of our sensations. It is not difficult to see that the subjective idealist, if he follows this principle consistently, must arrive at an absurd conclusion. Everything that exists, including other people, adds up to no more than my own sensations. It follows, then, that only I exist. This subjective idealist conception is known as *solipsism*. Needless to say, the subjective idealists constantly try to avoid solipsistic conclusions, thus disproving their own initial proposition. Berkeley, for instance, maintained that to exist is to be perceived; nevertheless he tried to prove that beyond the limits of sensations there was God and our sensations were only the signposts by means of which God communicated his will to us.

The development of the sciences overthrows the idealist assertion that the world is based primarily on the supernatural, on the spiritual.

All materialists, proceeding from scientific knowledge, regard the spiritual as a product of the material. But the Marxist solution to the basic philosophical question, while developing this correct point of view, is distinguished by its *dialectical* character. The spiritual is a product of the *development* of matter, a property of highly organised matter. This means that the spiritual does not exist always and everywhere, but that it arises only at a definite stage of development of matter and is itself subject to historical change.

The second aspect of the basic philosophical question, as mentioned above, is the problem of the knowability of the world.

All consistent and conscious advocates of philosophical materialism defend and seek to substantiate the principle of the knowability of the world. They regard our knowledge, concepts and ideas as reflections of objective reality. Only a minority, who are not consistently materialist, tend to deny the possibility of obtaining reliable objective knowledge. This philosophical position is known as *agnosticism* (from the Greek "a" meaning no, and "gnosis", knowledge).[1]

1 Engels points out that in the past agnosticism also appeared sometimes as a veiled form of materialism. In Britain, for instance, some of the 19th-century natural scientists (Thomas Huxley and others) who were too much under the influence of bourgeois prejudice to openly proclaim themselves materialists, adopted the guise of agnosticism.

As regards idealism, some of its exponents did adopt the position that the world was knowable (for example, the objective idealist Hegel, who nevertheless regarded knowledge not as the reflection of objective reality, but as the world spirit's cognition of itself). Other idealists maintained that in cognition we are concerned only with our own sensations, perceptions and cannot go beyond the limits of the cognising subject (the subjective idealists Berkeley, Mach, Avenarius and others). And yet another group rejected in principle the possibility of knowing anything that exists outside and independently of the human consciousness (Kant, Nietzsche, etc.).

Lenin pointed out that agnostic philosophers quite often attempt to adopt an intermediate position between materialism and idealism, but veer in the end towards idealist denial of the external world and the objective content in human concepts and ideas. The characteristic feature of modern idealism is that, unlike classical idealism, most of its supporters take the stand of agnosticism.

Once we understand the meaning and significance of the basic question of philosophy, we are able to find our way amid the diversity of philosophical doctrines, trends and schools that have succeeded one another in the course of thousands of years. There are only two main streams in philosophy: materialism and idealism. This means that any philosophical doctrine, no matter how original, is ultimately either materialist or idealist in substance.

The struggle between materialism and idealism is closely connected with the struggle between science and religion. Since it is clearly opposed to idealism and religion, materialism, as a rule, rejects the religious explanation of the world and provides the theoretical basis of atheism.

Idealism is closely bound up with religion, of which it is a direct or indirect theoretical expression and substantiation. Subjective idealism, which usually claims that sensorily perceived objects are no more than the sensations of the individual, nevertheless quite often recognises the existence of a supersensory, supernatural first cause, that is to say, the existence of God. On the other hand, the "world reason" of the objective idealists is, in fact, a philosophical pseudonym for God. It would be wrong, however, to identify idealism with religion, because idealism is a system of erroneously conceived theoretical views that have taken shape in the course of the contradictory development of knowledge. Idealist philosophy has its certain *social and epistemological roots.*

When we speak of the epistemological roots of idealism, we mean a one-sided approach to cognition, the exaggeration or even absolutisation of one of the aspects of this intricate, many-sided, and internally contradictory process. In pointing out the epistemolog-

ical roots of idealism, Marxism thus emphasises that idealism is not a meaningless jumble of words, but a distorted reflection of reality, that it is connected with certain peculiarities and contradictions of the process of cognition.

The contradictions we encounter in cognitive activity take many forms. They may be contradictions between thinking (concepts) and the sensory reflection of reality (sensations), between theory and practice, and so on. The epistemological roots of idealism lie in the fact that a particular side of cognition or a particular proposition is exaggerated or absolutised to such an extent that it ceases to be true and becomes an error. Thus, some idealists, eager to stress the active character of thinking, arrive at the conclusion that it has a creative force which is independent of matter. The subjective idealists, proceeding from what we know of the qualities of things by means of our sensory perceptions, infer that only our sensations are known to us and they are the only thing we can know anything about. "...Philosophical idealism is a *one-sided*, exaggerated ... development (inflation, distention) of one of the features, aspects, facets of knowledge into an absolute, *divorced* from matter, from nature, apotheosised.... Rectilinearity and one-sidedness, woodenness and petrification, subjectivism and subjective blindness—*voilà* the epistemological roots of idealism."[1]

Certain social conditions are needed to turn the possibility of the emergence of idealism into a reality, to turn certain individual errors of cognition into a philosophical system. This comes about when the errors in cognition correspond to the demands of certain classes and social groups, and are supported by them. The social conditions required to bring about idealism are: contradiction between manual and mental work, the appearance and development of classes, private ownership of the means of production and exploitation of man by man. Intellectual activity, once it has broken away from manual labour, acquires a relatively autonomous character and becomes the privilege of the property-owning, exploiting classes. The ideologists of these classes, who treat manual labour with contempt, are deluded into thinking that mental activity is the determinative factor in the existence and develop-

[1] V. I. Lenin, *On the Question of Dialectics*,* Vol. 38, p. 363.

* For the reader's convenience the title of the particular work quoted from is given in full but, unless otherwise stated, the volume and page references are to the *Collected Works* of V. I. Lenin, Foreign Languages Publishing House (Progress Publishers), Moscow, and to the *Collected Works* of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Progress Publishers, Moscow. Works of Marx and Engels that have not yet appeared in collected form are referred to in the most recent Progress editions.—*Ed.*

ment of society.

Reactionary social classes have an interest in seeing that the development of cognition does not undermine the idealist and religious superstitions prevailing in a society based on exploitation. The need to preserve the interests of these classes is quite often the reason why certain individual idealist mistakes that occur in the process of cognition become reinforced and harden into definite systems of beliefs. Lenin wrote: "Human knowledge is not ... a straight line, but a curve, which endlessly approximates a series of circles, a spiral. Any fragment, segment, section of this curve can be transformed (transformed one-sidedly) into an independent, complete, straight line, which then (if one does not see the wood for the trees) leads into the quagmire, into clerical obscurantism (where it is *anchored* by the class interests of the ruling classes)."[1]

Though he stressed their inner connection, Lenin pointed out that it would be vulgarisation to identify idealism with religion. Philosophical idealism is the road to religion—"*through one of the shades* of the infinitely complex *knowledge* (dialectical) of man."[2]

Philosophy and religion are different forms of social consciousness. Religious arguments are based on blind faith, while philosophy appeals to the reason and seeks to furnish logical proof for its propositions.

3. Dialectics and Metaphysics

Whereas the question of the relationship of thinking to being is the first and paramount question of philosophy, the second most important philosophical question is the question of whether the world is in a changeless state or, on the contrary, is constantly changing and developing. The supporters of the former view are called, in Marxist-Leninist terminology, metaphysicists, while those who believe in change and development are known as dialecticians.

Dialectics[3] considers things, their qualities and relationships, and also their mental reflections, concepts, in their interconnection, in motion: inception, contradictory development and disappearance.

[1] Ibid.

[2] Ibid.

[3] The word "dialectics" is derived from the Greek *dialektikos*, which means "debate" or "argument". In ancient times dialectics meant revealing the truth through argument, through disclosing the contradictions in the thoughts of one's opponents.

Ignorance of dialectics was a weakness of the majority of pre-Marxist materialists. It was this that made it difficult for them to evolve a consistent materialist view of the world, and particularly of society. In their understanding of social phenomena the pre-Marxist materialists, despite their hostility to the idealist interpretation of nature, themselves stayed on naturalistically interpreted idealist positions.

As Lenin tells us, Marx and Engels made a masterly advance in the history of revolutionary thought mainly because they created materialist dialectics and used it to reshape philosophy, political economy, and history, and to provide a basis for the policy and tactics of the working-class movement.[1] Lenin characterises dialectics as the doctrine of development in its fullest, most profound and unbiased form, the doctrine of the relativity of human knowledge which provides us with a reflection of eternally developing matter.

The conscious application of dialectics allows us to make correct use of concepts, to take into consideration the interconnection of phenomena, their contradictoriness, changeability, and the passing of one contradiction into another. Only the dialectical-materialist approach to the analysis of the phenomena of nature, social life and consciousness reveals the actual laws which govern them and the motive forces of their development, making it possible to foresee the future and to discover effective means of moulding it according to human design. The scientific dialectical method of cognition is a revolutionary method, because acknowledgement of the fact that everything changes and develops implies the necessity for abolishing all that is obsolete and that impedes social progress.

The method of cognition diametrically opposed to the dialectical method is known, among Marxists, as the *metaphysical* method.[2]

The advocates of this method consider objects and phenomena in isolation from one another, as things that are essentially immutable and devoid of internal contradictions. The metaphysicist sees the relative stability and definiteness of an object or phenomena, but underestimates their capacity for change and development. The

1 See V. I. Lenin, *The Marx-Engels Correspondence*, Vol. 19, p. 554.

2 "Metaphysics" is derived from the Greek expression *metá tá physiká*, which means "that which goes beyond physics". In pre-Marxist and contemporary bourgeois philosophical literature it has a variety of meanings, but tends mainly to refer to the "department" of philosophy that claims knowledge of "suprasensible" being, supernatural reality, the "ultimate" essence, the other world, and so on. The founders of Marxism-Leninism have given the term a new meaning. In their works it is used mainly of an anti-dialectical interpretation of reality.

metaphysical mode of thinking denies the objective existence of contradictions, that is to say, it asserts that they are to be found only in thought, and then only when thought is concerned with error.

In pre-Marxist philosophy, materialism at the first stages of its existence (for example, in ancient Greece) was organically connected with naive dialectics, but subsequently, under the influence of many factors, particularly the limitations of the natural science of its day, it acquired a metaphysical character. On the other hand, dialectics was developed not only by the materialists but also by certain outstanding exponents of idealism (for example, Hegel).

The history of dialectics may be divided into the following basic stages: the spontaneous, naive dialectics of the ancient philosophers; the dialectics of the materialists of the Renaissance (Giordano Bruno and others); the idealist dialectics of German classical philosophy (Kant, Fichte, Schelling and Hegel); the dialectics of the revolutionary democrats of the 19th century (Belinsky, Herzen, Chernyshevsky and others); and Marxist-Leninist materialist dialectics as the highest form of contemporary dialectics. The unity of materialism and dialectics has acquired scientifically substantiated and consistent expression in the Marxist-Leninist philosophy.

4. The Subject-Matter of Marxist-Leninist Philosophy and Its Relationship to Other Sciences

Unlike bourgeois philosophy, dialectical materialism is based on the firm foundation of modern science and progressive social practice. Bourgeois philosophers usually oppose philosophy to science, assuming that philosophy cannot, and by its very nature should not, be a science. "Philosophy, as I shall understand the word," writes Bertrand Russell, "is something intermediate between theology and science. Like theology, it consists of speculations on matters as to which definite knowledge has, so far, been unascertainable; but like science, it appeals to human reason rather than to authority, whether that of tradition or that of revelation. All *definite* knowledge—so I should contend—belongs to science; all *dogma* as to what surpasses definite knowledge belongs to theology. But between theology and science there is a No Man's Land, exposed to attack from both sides; this No Man's Land is philosophy."[1]

[1] Bertrand Russell, *History of Western Philosophy and Its Connection with Political and Social Circumstances from the Earliest Times to the Present Day*, Allen and Unwin, London, 1948, p. 10.

This description fully applies to modern idealist philosophy, which is closely interlinked with religion. But besides such philosophy there is also the consistently scientific philosophy of dialectical and historical materialism. Marxist philosophy is, in the words of Engels, "a world outlook which has to establish its validity and be applied not in a science of sciences standing apart, but in the real sciences".[1]

Every specialised science investigates qualitatively definite laws—mechanical, physical, chemical, biological, economic, etc. There is no science, however, that studies laws that apply equally to the phenomena of nature, the development of society, and human thought. It is these universal laws that form the subject-matter of Marxist-Leninist philosophy. Engels called materialist dialectics the science of the *most general laws of the motion and development of nature, of human society and thought.* The study of the laws and categories of the universal dialectical process forms the heart of the Marxist philosophical world outlook and furnishes a general method of scientific cognition of the world, which takes a specific form in every specialised science.

Every science makes use of certain general concepts (categories); for example, the concepts of "causality", "necessity", "law", "form", "content", and so on. Specialised sciences naturally do not study these categories, but use them as ready-made forms of thinking. Thus, chemistry investigates the laws of the chemical process, and biology, the laws of life. Only philosophy investigates law as the essential connection between phenomena, universality in all its infinitely varied forms.

In the specialised sciences we also have to do with concepts whose content is restricted to the given sphere of research. The basic concepts of political economy, for instance, are commodity, money and capital. *Philosophical categories*, unlike those of the specialised sciences, *are the most general concepts* which are used directly or indirectly in any science. No scientist, whether he is a naturalist, historian, economist, or literary scholar, can do without such most general concepts as law, regularity, contradiction, essence and phenomenon, cause and effect, necessity and chance, content and form, possibility and reality. The philosophical categories express the most general connections between the phenomena and at the same time are stages in cognising the world around us, generalise the historical experience of man's investigation of the world; they are the instruments of thought.

Of course, the study of philosophical categories is no substitute

[1] F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1977, pp. 169-70.

for studying specific processes. Marxist-Leninist philosophy is a guide to cognition in the most diverse fields of reality, but it does not replace and cannot replace these specialised sciences and the specific research methods they employ. It does not offer ready-made solutions to the questions that are studied by the specialised sciences; rather it arms them with a scientific philosophical world outlook, a general scientific *methodology*.

The scientific philosophical method is based on the application to cognition of the most general laws of development of nature, society and thought. Dialectical materialism provides us with knowledge of these laws.

A characteristic feature of pre-Marxist and, even more so, of contemporary bourgeois philosophy is that it divorces the science of thinking (logic) from the theory of knowledge (epistemology), and separates both of these from the theory of existence (ontology). Marxist philosophy rejects this metaphysical opposition and provides grounds for the principle of the unity of dialectics, logic and the theory of knowledge. This means that materialist dialectics, that is to say, the theory of development in its fullest and most balanced form, also comprises a theory of cognition and the logical forms by means of which this historical process takes place. The laws of cognition, of thinking are the reflection of the general laws of being in the human consciousness. This is why Lenin wrote that "dialectics, as understood by Marx, and also in conformity with Hegel, includes what is now called the theory of knowledge, or epistemology, which, too, must regard its subject-matter historically, studying and generalising the origin and development of knowledge, the transition from *non*-knowledge to knowledge".[1]

There are, of course, quite definite distinctions between dialectics, logic and the theory of knowledge within their general unity. These distinctions between the individual components of dialectical materialism are relative.

Historical materialism is an inseparable part of Marxist-Leninist philosophy. Without it the dialectical materialist world outlook could not possibly exist. Stressing the unity of all aspects and parts of Marxist philosophy, Lenin observed that in this philosophy, "which is cast from a single piece of steel, you cannot eliminate one basic premise, one essential part, without departing from objective truth without falling a prey to bourgeois-reactionary falsehood".[2]

The structure of Marxist-Leninist philosophy is complex, all the more so because life constantly reveals new targets of research,

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Karl Marx*, Vol. 21, p. 54.
[2] V. I. Lenin, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, Vol. 14, p. 326.

hitherto unknown problems, and thus introduces changes in the subject-matter of philosophy, placing in the foreground now one of its aspects, now another. Marxist-Leninist philosophy today is a system of philosophical disciplines, an integral world outlook, which is at the same time a theory of knowledge, logic and a general sociological theory.

The experience of history shows that the effectiveness of philosophy, that is to say, its significance in theory and practice, depends largely on the extent to which it embraces the whole ensemble of human knowledge. Science and philosophy have always benefited by learning from each other. Many ideas that formed the foundations of contemporary science were first advanced by philosophy. One has only to mention the brilliant insights of Leucippus and Democritus concerning the atomic structure of matter. One could also cite Descartes' concept of the reflex and the principle which he formulated of the conservation of motion (the constant of the multiplication of mass by velocity). The idea of the existence of molecules as complex particles consisting of atoms was developed on the general philosophical plane in the works of the French philosopher Pierre Gassendi, and also by the Russian Mikhail Lomonosov. It was the philosophers who formulated the idea of the development and general interconnection of phenomena, the principle of the material unity of the world. Lenin substantiated the principle of the inexhaustibility of matter, which constitutes the fundamental idea of modern natural science. The progress of science has at the same time substantially enriched philosophy. Materialism has changed its form with every new great discovery in natural science.

Comparatively recently the adherents of one of the most widespread trends in modern bourgeois philosophy, neopositivism, were maintaining that science had no need of philosophy whatever, that modern natural science itself could answer philosophical questions without resort to philosophy. As for any purely philosophical problems not studied by natural science, the neopositivists maintained that they were pseudoproblems, that is to say, they had no scientific meaning. This approach to the question of the relationship between philosophy and natural science has today been condemned even by many neopositivists, because it turned out to be of no use in principle to natural science, which itself asks philosophy questions.

Natural science today is strongly influenced by integrating tendencies, it is seeking new general theories, such as a general theory of elementary particles, a general picture of the development of the vegetable and animal world, a general theory of systems, a

general theory of control, and so on. Generalisations at such a high level can be made only with a flourishing philosophical culture. Marxist-Leninist philosophy with its dialectical method helps to ensure the unity and interconnection of all aspects of the rapidly extending and deepening, infinitely varied world of knowledge.

A constant and increasing intrinsic need is felt in various scientific fields to examine the logical apparatus of knowledge, the character of theory and the means by which it is built up, the analysis of the relationship between empirical and theoretical knowledge, the initial concepts of science and methods of learning the truth. All this, too, is the task of philosophical inquiry.

The scientist with no philosophical training quite often makes glaring philosophical and methodological mistakes, particularly when assessing new phenomena. Frederick Engels in his day observed that philosophy takes its revenge on those natural scientists who neglect it. Illustrating his point by quoting several scientists who had become addicted to the absurd superstition of spiritism, he showed that unimaginative empiricism with its scorn of theoretical thinking leads science into mysticism.

The most eminent natural scientists of modern times constantly stress the tremendous orientational significance of a philosophical world outlook in scientific inquiry. Max Planck said that the scientist's world outlook would always determine the direction of his research. Louis de Broglie points out that the split between science and philosophy that occurred in the 19th century harmed both philosophy and natural science. Max Born always stressed that physics was only viable when it was aware of the philosophical significance of its methods and results. According to Einstein, the contemporary physicist is obliged to devote far more attention to philosophical problems than were those of previous generations—owing to the difficulties presented by his own science.

As a world outlook and a method Marxist-Leninist philosophy helps us to understand the law-governed connection between the development of natural science and specific historical conditions, to obtain a deeper comprehension of the social significance and general prospects of scientific discoveries and their technical applications.

The whole dramatically conflicting picture of modern social life places tremendous demands on philosophy. The humanities as well as science and technology are coming to the fore again.

In this situation of intense ideological conflict those who work in specialised fields of knowledge and are not armed with a scientific world outlook and method, quite often find themselves powerless to resist the impact of bourgeois ideology and fall prey to idealist

philosophy. "In order to hold his own in this struggle and carry it to a victorious finish, the natural scientist must be a modern materialist, a conscious adherent of the materialism represented by Marx, i.e., he must be a dialectical materialist."[1]

All spheres of present-day life: the productive forces, science, technology, economic, class and national relationships, intellectual pursuits, culture and everyday life, are in the throes of revolutionary change. Man himself is changing. What has caused this revolution which is transforming the whole world, all aspects of human life? In what way are the various aspects of this worldwide revolutionary process connected and interdependent? What are its directions and motive forces? What may be the social consequences of the scientific and technological revolution that we are witnessing today? Is national and social oppression eternal? Where is mankind heading? Why do the tremendous forces created and set in motion by human beings often turn against them? Where should we seek the sources of world wars and the threat of thermonuclear disaster? How can wars be abolished? Not a single specialised science, no matter how great its significance, can answer these and other vitally important questions of our time. These are philosophical questions, questions of how we look upon the world, and the answers to them are to be found in the philosophy of Marxism-Leninism.

Marxist-Leninist philosophy regards social progress, the changes occurring in modern society from the standpoint of how they relate to the emancipation of mankind from all oppression. One of its major principles is *revolutionary humanism*, a doctrine that states the case for the revolutionary transformation of the society in the interests of the free, all-round, harmonious development of the human person.

Philosophical world outlooks have a class, partisan character. What is meant by the partisanship of the philosophical world outlook? It implies mainly an adherence to one of the principal philosophical parties—materialism or idealism.

Contemporary revisionists maintain that the Communist parties should be neutral towards philosophy. Their programmes should be neither materialist, nor idealist, neither atheist, nor religious. This revisionist preaching is presented as an attempt to unite all forces, but in reality it invites us to turn away from the struggle against bourgeois ideology, which, as we know, is infused with idealism. In contrast to the revisionist appeasement of bourgeois ideology, the philosophy of Marxism-Leninism is openly committed and partisan, and this is expressed in its struggle against idealism, in its

[1] V. I. Lenin, *On the Significance of Militant Materialism*, Vol. 33, p. 233.

consistent championing of the principles of materialism.

The revisionists say that, by recognising the partisanship of philosophical theory, the Marxists allow themselves to make an oversimplified division of philosophers into two camps—materialists and idealists—and thus repel a considerable number of philosophers and representatives of the other social sciences, while they themselves turn their backs on all that is of value in non-Marxist philosophy, sociology, economic theory, historiography and so on. The revisionist argument that the division of philosophy into materialism and idealism leads to oversimplification is surprising, to say the least. It is not the Marxists who divide philosophers into materialists and idealists. From time immemorial philosophers have divided themselves into two camps, and the division has remained in force to this day. This is a real fact of the history of philosophy. Materialism and idealism are the two warring parties in philosophy. The struggle between them was waged in the past and is still being waged today. The most modern philosophy, Lenin emphasised, is just as partisan as philosophy was 2,000 years ago. In the final analysis, the struggle between materialism and idealism reflects the struggle of classes in society.

The class struggle is not confined to the economic or political sphere, and also finds expression in the sphere of world outlook. This struggle, which has proceeded throughout the development of class society, acquires a special intensity at turning-points in history, when questions of world outlook come to the fore.

The present epoch is marked by the most profound social transformations ever known in the history of mankind. It is an epoch of class and national-liberation struggles, the epoch of man's advance from capitalism to socialism. It is at the same time an epoch of intense ideological struggle by the forces of socialism, peace and genuine democracy against the forces of imperialism, a struggle between the communist and the bourgeois world outlooks, which justifies and defends the obsolete world of capitalism with its ideology and practice of exploitation of man by man.

Dialectical and historical materialism took shape as the philosophical basis of the world outlook of the consistently revolutionary class—the proletariat, as the ideological banner of the millions of the working people. Lenin remarked that Marx's philosophical materialism had shown the proletariat the "way out of the spiritual slavery".[1]

Marxist philosophy comprises the philosophical and methodolog-

[1] V. I. Lenin, *The Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism*, Vol. 19, p. 28.

ical basis of the programme, strategy, tactics and policies of the Communist and Workers' parties, of their practical activities. Marxism's political line is always "inseparably bound up with its philosophical principles".[1]

Bourgeois ideologists, echoed by the revisionists, usually acclaim political neutrality in matters of theory as a synonym for objectivity. Some of them maintain that theory, including philosophical theory, stands above the practical, political interests of classes, social groups and parties, and thus represents knowledge for the sake of knowledge. They should be reminded of the dictum of Karl Marx, who called upon philosophy to ally itself with politics, and said: "That, however, is the only alliance by which present-day philosophy can become truth."[2]

No one can escape from politics while living in its atmosphere. Everything today is drawn into the vortex of political struggle. If we are to carry out firmly and unfailingly the Marxist-Leninist principle of the unity of philosophy and politics, we must overcome once and for all the severance of philosophy from politics, and also the vulgarisers' attempts to dissolve philosophy in current politics.

The ideologists of the bourgeoisie and the revisionists acclaim uncommittedness and propose the idea of a "third line" in philosophy, which is supposedly superior to both materialism and idealism. But can there be in class society any ideologists, any thinkers, who "soar" above classes and disregard their interests? Such people do not exist. In fact, we constantly find that the very people who boast of their uncommittedness are in practice those who conduct a far from impartial struggle against the philosophy of Marxism-Leninism, who seek to overthrow it and replace it with the bourgeois world outlook.

The idea of uncommittedness is opposed by the fundamental Leninist principle of partisanship. Lenin stressed that "...there can be no 'impartial' social science in a society based on class struggle",[3] that "...no living person *can help taking the side* of one class or another (once he has understood their interrelationships), can help rejoicing at the successes of that class and being disappointed by its failures, can help being angered by those who are hostile to that class, who hamper its development by disseminating backward views, and so on and so forth".[4]

[1] V. I. Lenin, *The Attitude of the Workers' Party to Religion*, Vol. 15, p. 405.

[2] Karl Marx to Arnold Ruge in Dresden, Cologne, March 13 (1843), Vol. 1, p. 400.

[3] V. I. Lenin, *The Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism*, Vol. 19, p. 23.

[4] V. I. Lenin, *The Heritage We Renounce*, Vol. 2, p. 531.

Bourgeois ideologists maintain that partisanship is incompatible with the scientific approach. Partisanship certainly does not coincide with scientificality when philosophy expresses and defends the position and interests of the classes that are passing from the historical scene. In doing so, philosophy departs from the truth of life, from its scientific evaluation. And, in the opposite case, philosophy is objective and scientific if, by truly expressing life, it expresses the position, interests and struggle of the progressive classes of society, and urges mankind to seek the truth.

So partisanship may be of different kinds. For example, the materialist philosophy of the 17th and 18th centuries, which expressed the interests of the newly born bourgeoisie (then a progressive social class) and which fought against the feudal religious-idealist world outlook, was partisan, was committed, and at the same time, though limited in scope, it stimulated the development of the sciences and of society as a whole. But the situation changed radically when the bourgeoisie ceased to be a progressive class and became a reactionary one. The interests of the modern imperialist bourgeoisie are opposed to those of the overwhelming majority of humanity, their struggle for full national and social liberation, for world peace, that is to say, they contradict the objective course of history. Expressing as it does, in one way or another, the interests of the imperialist bourgeoisie, modern bourgeois philosophy is also partisan, but this partisanship no longer coincides with scientific objectivity, because it distorts reality.

The scientific world outlook, truly reflecting the laws of development of nature and society, defends the interests of those classes that stand for progress, for the future. In present-day conditions such a world outlook is Marxism-Leninism—the world outlook of the most progressive class, the working class, and its vanguard, the Communist Party. The partisanship of Marxist philosophy lies in the fact that it consciously and consistently serves the interests of the great cause of building socialism and communism. The principle of partisanship demands consistent and implacable struggle against theories and beliefs hostile to the cause of socialism. There can be no compromises on philosophical questions. "...The *only* choice is—either bourgeois or socialist ideology. There is no middle course (for mankind has not created a 'third' ideology, and, moreover, in a society torn by class antagonisms there can never be a non-class or an above-class ideology). Hence, to belittle the socialist ideology *in any way, to turn aside from it in the slightest degree* means to strengthen bourgeois ideology."[1]

[1] V. I. Lenin, *What Is to Be Done?*, Vol. 5, p. 384.

Every step in the development of science and social practice confirms the truth of Lenin's idea that "...by following the *path* of Marxian theory we shall draw closer and closer to objective truth (without ever exhausting it); but by following *any other path* we shall arrive at nothing but confusion and lies".[1]

A revolutionary theory is needed for the revolutionary transformation of society. Such a theory is Marxism-Leninism.

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, Vol. 14, p. 143.

Chapter II

THE BIRTH OF MARXIST PHILOSOPHY AND ITS DEVELOPMENT

The birth of dialectical and historical materialism was a revolution in philosophy introducing for the first time in history a *scientific philosophical world outlook* that embraced both nature and society and formed the theoretical basis for the conscious, communist reshaping of society.

1. Social-Economic and Political Preconditions of the Rise of Marxism

The way for the emergence of Marxism was prepared by the whole social-economic, political and spiritual development of man, especially by the development of the capitalist system, and the contradictions inherent in that system, by the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.

In one European country after another, the bourgeois revolutions of the 17th and 18th centuries destroyed the feudal social system, a system that had lasted hundreds of years and seemed unshakeable. The bourgeoisie's conquest of political power paved the way for the further development of capitalism, for the industrial revolution of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, which necessarily gave rise, on the one hand, to large-scale machine industry and, on the other, to the industrial proletariat, which was qualitatively different from any previous exploited and oppressed class.

The tremendous growth of the productivity of labour and social wealth brought about by capitalist development did not have the effect of improving the lot of the working masses. On the contrary, at one pole of society, tremendous wealth was accumulated in the hands of the bourgeoisie, while at the other, the proletarians were made destitute. Proletarianisation of the small producers, harsh exploitation of the workers, including women and children, appalling living conditions, outrageous fines and all kinds of other restrictions, unemployment, which increased particularly in the periods of recurrent economic crises of overproduction (beginning from 1825)—such was the grim reality of capitalism, which the ideologists of capitalism hailed as the realisation of great humanist ideas.

The bourgeois ideologists of the 17th and 18th centuries had portrayed the abolition of feudal social relationships as a time when reason, justice, equality and even fraternity would prevail; but the capitalist reality of the 19th century shattered these social illusions.

The working class, which in the period of bourgeois revolutions had helped the bourgeoisie in its struggle against the dominant feudal estates, found itself in the new context of established capitalist society face to face with its class enemy—the employers, the bourgeosie. The workers' opposition to the capitalists showed itself more and more often in strikes and sometimes even took the form of spontaneous armed rebellion. Such were the rebellions of the weavers of Lyons in France (1831 and 1834), the uprising of the Silezian weavers in Germany (1844). England (in the 1830s and 1840s) saw the spread of the first mass revolutionary proletarian movement—Chartism. The struggle of the working class for emancipation in those days was spontaneous and unorganised in character; it lacked a clear class-consciousness and understanding of the ways and means of abolishing capitalist oppression.

It was Marx and Engels who created the scientific theory of the emancipation movement of the working class. They proved that the spontaneity, disorganisation and scatteredness of working-class actions were only a passing phase in history and could be overcome by uniting the spontaneous working-class movement with a scientific socialist theory, by organising the mass proletarian parties, armed with a scientific understanding of social development and functioning as the advanced detachments and leaders of the proletariat.

Even then (in the 1840s) bourgeois critics of socialism accused Marxism of an uncritical worship of the proletariat. Marx and Engels, however, repudiating the notion that scientific socialism was a "new religion", showed that the proletariat was the necessary creation of large-scale capitalist industry, and that its struggle against capitalism was the natural expression of the contradictions inherent in this social system.

The proletariat is indeed capable of emancipating all those who are exploited and oppressed. It cannot emancipate itself without destroying the economic conditions of human exploitation in general. This conclusion regarding the historic liberating mission of the working class and the inevitability of the revolutionary transition from capitalism to socialism (and subsequently, to the classless communist society) was made by Marx and Engels on the basis of the scientific investigation of social development, primarily the development of capitalism. In this they were guided by the new

philosophy of dialectical and historical materialism which they had founded, and which revealed the path to cognition of the economic necessity of transition from one social formation to another.

2. Theoretical Sources of Dialectical and Historical Materialism

Thus we see that the creation of Marxism became possible and necessary only in the particular historical conditions that took shape in the Europe of the mid-19th century. But something more than objective conditions are required to bring a scientific theory into being. There must also be subjective creative activity of profound scholars, incisive study of new facts and processes, critical assimilation and development of all preceding scientific knowledge. And it is self-evident that these qualities of scientific genius were doubly essential in shaping Marxism, which differs fundamentally from all previous social doctrines.

The revolution in philosophy brought about by Marx and Engels was in no way a nihilistic denial of the achievements of earlier philosophy and knowledge in general. As Lenin pointed out, the greatness of Marx lay in the fact that he "...based his work on the firm foundation of the human knowledge acquired under capitalism.... He reconsidered, subjected to criticism, and verified on the working-class movement everything that human thinking had created, and therefrom formulated conclusions which people, hemmed in by bourgeois limitations or bound by bourgeois prejudices could not draw".[1]

The theoretical sources of Marxism are German classical philosophy, English classical political economy and French Utopian socialism. Here we shall consider German classical philosophy.

Marxist philosophy is the highest form of the materialist world outlook. Marx and Engels fully appreciated what had been achieved by the earlier materialist philosophers, their idea that the explanation of the world was to be sought in the world itself without resorting to supernatural causes, the doctrine of nature, of matter and its self-motion, the view of cognition as the reflection of the surrounding world, their atheism, their efforts to explain the history of mankind by natural, i.e., by empirically stated, factors. At the same time they pointed out the historical narrowness of such materialism.

Pre-Marxist materialism was predominantly *mechanistic* in

[1] V. I. Lenin, *The Tasks of the Youth Leagues,* Vol. 31, pp. 286-87.

character, that is to say, it explained all the manifold phenomena of nature and society by means of the laws of mechanical motion. The mechanistic view, inasmuch as its explanation of nature proceeded from nature itself without appealing to the supernatural, had been progressive in the 17th and 18th centuries, when the most highly developed of the sciences was mechanics. By the middle of the 19th century, however, it had become entirely inadequate, particularly when it was a matter of explaining biological, psychological and social processes.

Pre-Marxist materialism was mainly *metaphysical* materialism, that is to say, it regarded nature and society as essentially changeless, immutable. This is not to suggest, of course, that the pre-Marxist materialists denied the motion of matter, and in general refused to acknowledge individual facts of change and development. Some of them actually made some very good guesses about the changes that take place in inorganic nature, and the evolution of certain species of living creatures out of other species. But the characteristic feature of pre-Marxist materialism as a whole was its failure to understand the *universality* and *essentiality* of development, its interpretation of development as only the increase or decrease of what already existed. According to this concept, motion was also to be understood mainly as mere shifting in space and time, as eternal repetition, circulation of natural phenomena. Needless to say, not only the materialists but also the overwhelming majority of idealists were metaphysicists in those days.

The third defect of the old materialism was that it confined itself to the materialist understanding of nature and, therefore, *could not provide a materialist understanding of social life.* Admittedly, the pre-Marxist materialists did oppose the religious interpretation of history. They argued that it was not supernatural but natural forces that operated in the life of society. But they saw the source of social movement in spiritual, ideal factors: the conscious activity of historical individuals, kings and statesmen, or human feelings and passions, such as the ambition of generals, selfishness, love, hatred, or the new ideas of philosophers and politicians. All these ideal incentives to action do, in fact, exist. But what the pre-Marxist materialists failed to see was that the spiritual motivation of human activity depended on a specific material, social-economic basis, i.e., on something that differed from the natural (e.g. geographical) environment.

The mechanistic and metaphysical features of 17th- and 18th-century materialism were criticised by the classical idealist philosophers of Germany at the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th centuries, particularly by Hegel. Hegel's dialectics was the

fullest theory of development yet conceived, although it had been evolved from fallacious, idealistic positions. As Marx observed, "the mystification which dialectic suffers in Hegel's hands, by no means prevents him from being the first to present its general form of working in a comprehensive and conscious manner. With him it is standing on its head. It must be turned right side up again, if you would discover the rational kernel within the mystical shell".[1]

The "rational kernel" of Hegel's dialectics was the idea of the universality, essentiality and necessity of development, which took place through the emergence and overcoming of internal contradictions, the mutual transformation of opposites, the leap-like transition of quantitative into qualitative changes, the negation of the old by the new. The basic proposition of Hegel's philosophy on the constant process of world development led logically to the revolutionary conclusion that the struggle with existing social evils had its roots in the universal law of eternal change and development and was, therefore, reasonable and necessary.

Hegel himself, however, as an idealist, regarded nature and society as embodiments of a spiritual, divine essence—the Absolute Idea. Hegel did not acknowledge the development of matter, of nature, which to him appeared to be only the external manifestation of the Absolute Idea.

In criticising Hegel's idealism, the founders of Marxism based themselves on Feuerbach's materialist philosophy. In contrast to Hegelian idealism, Feuerbach advocated anthropological materialism, which states that thought is not a divine essence but a natural human ability, inseparable from the brain, from man's bodily organisation, and indissolubly connected with the sensory reflection of the external material world. Feuerbach regarded man as the highest expression of nature; it was through man that nature felt, perceived and came to know itself.

Feuerbach stressed the unity of man and nature but at the same time tried to show the distinction between man and other living creatures. He saw gregariousness, the desire to be together with others as an essential part of man's nature. But he failed to understand the essence of human society and the laws of its development because he regarded human intercourse merely as a matter of love and spiritual affinity. Feuerbach underestimated Hegel's dialectics and did not understand that it could and should be preserved, once it had been freed of idealism and remoulded on a materialist basis.

Feuerbach's doctrine contained certain rudiments of the materialist interpretation of social phenomena, particularly of religion, the

[1] K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1974, p. 29.

criticism of which occupies an important place in his philosophy. Unlike the atheists of the 17th and 18th centuries, Feuerbach did not treat the emergence and existence of religion as being entirely due to ignorance and deception. He tried to show how religious images express people's life and sufferings, their desire for happiness and their dependence on nature and on one another. He failed to see, however, the social and economic roots of religion, which lie in the domination of man by the spontaneous forces of social development, in the poverty of the masses, in social inequality and exploitation. Feuerbach's philosophy combines atheism with an attempt to find a rational kernel in religious dogmas, with the belief that the humanist faith in man is supposedly rooted in religion, with the desire to prove the need for a "religion without God".

Feuerbach's materialism crowned the development of German classical philosophy and indicated, admittedly in very general terms, the path for the further development of philosophical materialism. This explains the influence that his philosophy (like Hegel's) exercised on the formation of Marx and Engels' philosophical views.

3. Marxist Philosophy and the Great Scientific Discoveries of the Mid-19th Century

The development of capitalism and the growth of large-scale industry stimulated the advance of the natural sciences and these, in their turn, not only promoted the development of production but also undermined the idealist and metaphysical understanding of nature. The most significant achievements of natural science between 1830 and 1850, achievements which Marx and Engels saw as confirmation of the philosophy they had created and one of the foundations of its development, were the discovery of the law of the conversion of energy, the discovery of the cellular structure of living organisms, and Darwin's theory of evolution.

In the early 1840s the German physician Julius Robert Mayer enunciated the law of the conservation and conversion of energy, which states that a certain quantity of motion in one of its forms (mechanical, thermal, etc.) is converted into an equal quantity of motion in any other of its forms. This law was theoretically and experimentally substantiated by Helmholtz and Faraday, while Joule and Lenz established the mechanical equivalent of heat, that is to say, calculated what quantity of mechanical energy is needed to provide a unit of thermal energy. It was proved that heat, light and other states of matter are qualitatively definite forms of

its motion, and that this motion cannot be created or destroyed, but is constantly converted from one state into another. From this the conclusion was drawn that motion cannot be reduced to the mere displacement of bodies in space, and that the conversion of one form of the motion of matter into another constitutes a qualitative change. The pre-Marxist materialists had simply declared that motion is not introduced into nature from outside, that it is the mode of existence of matter, but now it became possible to furnish a scientific proof of this philosophical proposition and to reach a dialectical understanding of the connection between matter and motion. Admittedly, neither Mayer nor any of the other natural scientists drew philosophical conclusions from the law of the conversion of energy; these vital conclusions were first formulated by Engels.

The discovery of the cellular structure of living matter was no less an important achievement of natural science. It came very close to the dialectical-materialist understanding of the unity of life in all its diversity. Even in the 17th and 18th centuries scientists had been aware of the existence of cells because individual cells and groups of cells were constantly being detected when the tissues of living organisms were examined under the microscope. But only in the 19th century did scientists seriously consider the physiological role of cells, their role as anatomical units of animal and vegetable tissues. In 1838-39 the German biologists Schleiden and Schwann evolved a theory of cells. Schwann, in particular, established that animal and vegetable tissues have basically the same structure and perform one and the same physiological function. The birth and development of the organism takes place through the multiplication of cells, their constant renewal—birth and death. The cellular theory proved the internal unity of all living beings and indirectly pointed to the unity of their origin. Dialectical-materialist conclusions from the cellular theory were drawn by Engels in his *Anti-Dühring* and *The Dialectics of Nature*.

Darwin's theory of evolution is the third great scientific discovery that took place in the middle of the 19th century. Darwin put an end to the notion of the species of animals and plants as "divine creations", not connected with anything else, providential and immutable, and thus laid the foundation of theoretical biology, which had been mainly a descriptive science. He proved the mutability of species of animals and plants, and the unity of their origin.

Evolutionary ideas had been voiced in general terms long before Darwin, both by philosophers and natural scientists. Diderot, the French 18th-century materialist, for instance, had suggested the possibility of the transformation of species. But unlike his prede-

cessors, Darwin did not confine himself to guess-work, and on the basis of a huge collection of empirical facts formulated a number of laws of the evolution of species. In so doing he treated man as the highest link in the general chain of development of the animal world, thus exploding Christian dogmas and the unscientific notions of human nature that were then current in natural science. To explain the origin of the qualitative distinctions between species that his fact-gathering had proved, Darwin evolved the theory of spontaneous natural selection. From these positions Darwin scientifically explained the fact of the relatively purposeful structure of organisms and their adaptability to the environment, casting aside the mystical interpretation of this fact, characteristic of idealistic doctrines. Marx and Engels assessed Darwin's evolutionary theory as dialectical-materialist in its essence, but stressed that Darwin was not a conscious dialectician.

Thus in formulating and developing their philosophical teaching, Marx and Engels based themselves not only on the achievements of the social sciences and social and historical practice, but also on the great discoveries of the natural science of their day. These discoveries created the necessary natural scientific preconditions for a consistently scientific philosophy—dialectical and historical materialism.

4. Dialectical and Historical Materialism Revolutionises Philosophy

The critical reconsideration by Marx and Engels of all previous philosophy and the philosophical revolution they brought about are interconnected processes. Their most important result has been the formation, assertion and development of a scientific world outlook.

As Lenin pointed out, Marxism arose as a direct and immediate continuation of the great achievements of previous social thought, and Marx's genius lay in the fact that he replied to the questions posed by his eminent predecessors.[1]

Marx and Engels did not, of course, create dialectical materialism and become the founders of the scientific ideology of the working class all at once. When they first took up theoretical and sociopolitical activities they were idealists and associated with the Left-wing members of the Hegelian school (the Young Hegelians), who were trying to draw revolutionary and atheistic conclusions

[1] See V. I. Lenin, *The Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism*, Vol. 19, p. 23.

from Hegel's philosophy. But unlike the other Young Hegelians (who represented the liberal bourgeoisie), Marx and Engels even in their very first works wrote as revolutionary democrats, defenders of the interests of the mass of the working people. In creating their philosophy Marx and Engels moved decisively away from the positions of idealistic revolutionary democracy to positions of materialism and communism. The driving force of this complex and many-sided process was their fight for the interests of the working people against the open and hidden supporters of feudal and capitalist exploitation.

When he wrote his Doctoral thesis in 1841, Marx was still an idealist. Yet he declared his philosophical credo to be militant atheism, the essence of which, he believed, was to fight against all earthly and heavenly gods, against all humiliation of the human personality. In 1842, Marx became the editor of the progressive *Rheinische Zeitung*, which under his leadership developed into a revolutionary organ. In his articles for this paper he defended the peasants oppressed by the landowners, and the wine-growers who were being ruined by the tax policy of the Prussian state, advocated freedom of the press, civil rights, and so on. It was this political struggle that made Marx conscious of the class nature of the system then existing in Germany. In 1842-1843, he began to move away from idealism towards materialism, away from revolutionary democracy towards communism. He decided that consistent atheism was incompatible with idealism, which actually justified the religious view of the world. The state, which he had previously regarded as the embodiment of reason, was now seen to be a political system which guarded interests of the property-owning classes opposed to those of the toiling masses.

The formation of Engels' philosophical beliefs took a similar course. In 1841, Engels crossed swords with the idealist Schelling, who had become a political reactionary, criticising him for preaching mysticism, religion and submission to the feudal authorities. As a counterblast to Schelling's theories Engels proposed the revolutionary interpretation of Hegelian philosophy. In doing so he noted the contradiction between Hegel's dialectical *method*, requiring that reality should be regarded as a state of constant flux, and his conservative *system*, which proclaimed the inevitability of the culmination of world history at the stage of social development that had already basically been reached in Western Europe. Engels spent the years 1842 to 1844 in Britain, economically the most developed country of those days, where he was able to witness the social consequences of the development of capitalism and actually took part in the Chartist movement; this visit did much to mould his

philosophical and socialist views.

While working independently of one another, Marx and Engels arrived at what were basically interconnected socio-political and philosophical views. Early in 1844, in Paris, the first issue of the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher* appeared under the editorship of Marx. It contained articles by both Marx and Engels. In his contribution Marx expounded the initial premises of dialectical materialism and scientific communism. Arguing that the proletariat was historically destined to bring socialism to the whole world, Marx inferred: "As philosophy finds its *material* weapons in the proletariat, so the proletariat finds its *spiritual* weapons in philosophy."[1] Similar views were expressed by Engels in his articles on the economic and political situation in Britain, and also in his criticism of bourgeois political economy.

The year 1844 marked the beginning of the great friendship between Marx and Engels. Between 1844 and 1846 they collaborated in producing two major works, *The Holy Family* and *The German Ideology*, in which they gave an all-round critical analysis of idealist philosophy and worked out the fundamental propositions of dialectical and historical materialism. Their *Poverty of Philosophy* and *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, published respectively in 1847 and 1848, were later described by Lenin as the first works of mature Marxism. Characterising the *Manifesto*, which had as its slogan the famous words of Marx and Engels "Working Men of All Countries, Unite!", Lenin said that "with the clarity and brilliance of genius, this work outlines a new world-conception, consistent materialism, which also embraces the realm of social life; dialectics, as the most comprehensive and profound doctrine of development; the theory of the class struggle and of the world-historic revolutionary role of the proletariat—the creator of a new, communist society".[2]

Thus the first essential step in answering the questions that the philosophers of the past had posed but had been unable to answer, was to find a correct point of departure for theoretical and political activity. This point of departure was for Marx and Engels the struggle against all and every kind of human exploitation, against the economic and political foundations of social oppression and inequality. Only from these positions of consistent revolutionary repudiation of any enslavement of man was it possible to create a *materialist* dialectics, which in contrast to the bourgeois world

[1] K. Marx, *Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law*, Vol. 3, p. 187.

[2] V. I. Lenin, *Karl Marx*, Vol. 21, p. 48.

outlook, perpetuating private property and the opposition between the haves and have-nots, "...lets nothing impose upon it, and is in its essence critical and revolutionary".[1] Only by taking as the point of departure the position, needs and interests of the most impoverished and most revolutionary class was it possible to give a materialist interpretation of history, an interpretation that revealed the decisive role of the working masses and material production in the history of mankind and scientifically proved the inevitability of communism.

Some bourgeois philosophers present the dialectical materialism of Marx and Engels as a combination of Hegel's dialectical (but also idealist) method and Feuerbach's materialist (but also metaphysical) theory. This is an obvious oversimplification and indicates a failure to understand the essence of the revolution in philosophy brought about by the founders of Marxism. It is impossible, in principle, to combine idealism and materialism, the dialectical and metaphysical ways of thinking; they are mutually exclusive. The founders of Marxism dialectically remoulded the materialist theories of modern times, including Feuerbach's philosophy. They also remoulded materialistically Hegel's dialectical method, which in its idealist form was of no use for scientific investigation of natural and social processes. This is what they called turning dialectics right side up again, that is, giving it a real content drawn from the sciences concerning nature and society.

It would be superficial to regard materialist dialectics only as a method, and philosophical materialism only as a theory applying that method for purposes of research. Materialist dialectics is not only a method but also a theory, to be specific, a theory of development, of the most general laws of development of nature, society and knowledge. Philosophical materialism is not only a theory but also a materialist method, a definite approach to the investigation of phenomena. In other words, *Marxist method is materialist as well as dialectical, and Marxist theory is dialectical as well as materialist.* This means that in Marxist philosophy materialism and dialectics are not independent of one another but combine together to form an integrated doctrine, because reality itself is at the same time both material and dialectical.

Thus, the creation of the *dialectical-materialist world outlook*, the conversion of materialism into dialectical materialism and the disclosure of the internal dialectics of material processes and their reflection in the process of cognition were all part of the revolution in philosophy carried out by Marx and Engels.

[1] K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 29.

A vitally important aspect of this philosophical revolution was the creation of historical materialism, that is, the extension of materialism to the understanding of social life. Lenin wrote of Marx's teaching: "His *historical materialism* was a great achievement in scientific thinking. The chaos and arbitrariness that had previously reigned in views on history and politics were replaced by a strikingly integral and harmonious scientific theory, which shows how, in consequence of the growth of productive forces, out of one system of social life another and higher system develops—how capitalism, for instance, grows out of feudalism."[1]

The pre-Marxist materialists remained, as we have seen, idealists in their views of society. This was due to their theoretical as well as their class narrowness. Matter, the material, was understood simply as any of various material substances. Quite naturally, therefore, they were unable to perceive the specific material foundations of social life—material production and material production relations.

But what the materialist conception of social life actually does is to show how all the diverse forms of human life are in the long run intrinsically connected with the development of social production. The discovery and investigation of this connection, that is to say, the elucidation of the role of labour in the history of mankind, is the point of departure of historical materialism.

The pre-Marxist materialists, while admitting man's dependence on nature and society and maintaining that all phenomena of social life formed an interconnected chain of cause and effect, usually reached the conclusion that everything that had happened, was happening, or would happen in the future, was inevitable and that people could do nothing of their own will to change it. At the same time, in opposing the religious fatalistic concept of the supernatural predestination of all that happens in society and the life of the individual, they rightly emphasised that people themselves are the makers of their own history. But these metaphysical materialists were unable to substantiate this proposition materialistically, scientifically, and they resorted to subjective interpretation of historical events, treating them as if they were brought about only by the will of individuals, particularly by outstanding historical personalities. The creation of historical materialism signified the overcoming of both fatalistic and subjectivist views of history.

Another feature of the revolution wrought by Marx and Engels in philosophy was their ending of the opposition between philosophical knowledge and the specialised sciences, whose achievements

[1] V. I. Lenin, *The Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism*, Vol. 19, p. 25.

philosophers had usually regarded as unimportant, an opposition which to a greater or smaller extent had been characteristic of all previous philosophy, particularly idealist philosophy. This was what Marx and Engels meant when they spoke of the abolition of philosophy in the old sense of the word, philosophy as the "science of sciences", avowedly independent of the historically limited knowledge available to the specialised sciences.

Marx and Engels showed that philosophy should be not the "science of sciences", looking down upon specific scientific research, but a scientific world outlook based on this research, generalising its data, and revealing the most general laws of the development of nature, human life, and the process of cognition.

Not only did the founders of Marxism reject the idea that philosophical knowledge was opposed to scientific knowledge; they also rejected the claim to absolute, complete, immutable knowledge requiring no further development that had characterised the metaphysical theories of the past. Philosophy, in becoming a scientific world outlook, moves over completely to the positions of science, which is always open to new conclusions, is constantly developing and being enriched with new propositions, and repudiates all obsolete assumptions.

The scientific philosophy of dialectical materialism makes wide use of the methods of research adopted by science, including hypotheses, postulates, the gathering and analysis of facts and the study of probability of specific processes. This scientific concept of the nature of philosophical knowledge, and consistent criticism of the metaphysical concept of philosophical knowledge, which even in Hegel's dialectics was treated as absolute knowledge (self-cognition of the Absolute Idea), constitute one of the most important aspects of the revolution in philosophy that was brought about by Marxism. "Hitherto," Marx observed sarcastically, "philosophers have had the solution of all riddles lying in their writing-desks, and the stupid, exoteric world had only to open its mouth for the roast pigeons of absolute knowledge to fly into it."[1] By this he meant that philosophy, inasmuch as it was regarded as "absolute knowledge", or "absolute science" (the German "Wissenschaft") was not really a science at all. Scientific philosophy is not a revelation proclaimed by a genius. Like any science, it is evolved by the joint efforts of scientists, research workers. While rejecting in principle the idea of a complete and finished philosophical system, the philosophy of Marxism is at the same time a *dialectical-materialist*

[1] K. Marx, *Letters from the "Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher"*, Vol. 3, p. 142.

system. This means that it is characterised by the fundamental unity of its theses and, further, that it is in motion, in development, on the road to new discoveries. It is constantly aware of and mindful of its unsolved problems, and while criticising its ideological opponents, also engages in self-criticism because it recognises that it is limited by the framework not only of the philosophical but also of the scientific knowledge, that has so far been attained. Like any system of scientific knowledge the philosophy of Marxism regards its scientific theses only as approximate reflections of reality, as a unity of relative and absolute truth.

Marx and Engels put an end to the opposition between philosophy and practical activity, particularly the activity expressed in the proletariat's movement for liberation. Philosophy, they argued, does not exist in an abstract element of pure thought, any more than such "pure" thought exists independent of reality; from now on philosophy's road to life lies in the revolutionary practice of the proletariat, of all working masses. In the light of this fundamentally new attitude to the tasks of philosophy we see the significance of Marx's famous statement: "The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world in various ways; the point is to *change* it."[1]

The bourgeois critics of Marxism draw from this thesis the conclusion that Marx did not care whether or not philosophy explained the world as long as it changed it. In fact, Marx's statement is aimed against the philosophy that usually predominates in class-divided society, the kind of philosophy for which the interpretation of what exists provides an excuse for saying that it is inevitable and must be tolerated. From the Marxist standpoint, however, scientific interpretation can and must furnish the theoretical argument for changing reality. Consequently philosophy's task is not to give up trying to explain the world, but to link this explanation with revolutionary practical activity.

Revolutionary drive, a refusal to tolerate obsolete ideas and practices, a direct open partisanship, a rigorously scientific approach, implacable hostility to dogmatism and its ossified formulas, the bold stating of new problems and the creative development of scientific theory in a way that is irreconcilable with revisionist distortion—all these features of dialectical and historical materialism (like Marxism as a whole) express the essence of the revolutionary upheaval set in motion by Marxism.

[1] K. Marx, *Theses on Feuerbach*, Vol. 5, p. 5.

5. Development of Marxist Philosophy by Lenin

When expounding and developing their theory, the founders of Marxism often stressed that it was not a dogma but a guide to action. Lenin had in mind this principle, which distinguishes Marxism from all previous doctrines, when he said: "We do not regard Marx's theory as something completed and inviolable; on the contrary, we are convinced that it has only laid the foundation stone of the science which socialists *must* develop in all directions if they wish to keep pace with life."[1]

The contemporary stage of development of the whole theory of Marxism, and particularly dialectical and historical materialism, is linked with the name of Lenin and those who learned from him and continued his work.

Engels wrote that philosophical materialism assumed, and should assume, a new form with each new epoch-making discovery in natural science, not to mention the radical socio-economic transformations recorded in history, which played a key role in the development of philosophy.

Marx and Engels evolved their theory in an epoch when the task of revolutionary transition from capitalism to socialism was not as yet an immediate practical possibility. Lenin developed Marxism in new historical conditions, in the epoch of capitalism's development into its final, imperialist stage, the epoch that was to see the emergence of the new, socialist society. The conditions of the time demanded of Marxists that they should analyse the new phenomena and adopt a new approach to the vital problems of the strategy and tactics of the revolutionary struggle of the working class. Unless this was done, the philosophy of Marxism would cease to be a living theory, a method of cognition and revolutionary action and congeal into a lifeless dogma, a one-sided theory devoid of effective, transforming power. In a situation of intensifying economic, social, and political contradictions the enemies of Marxism redoubled their attacks on its philosophical foundations. There appeared a revisionist trend that tried to combine Marxism with various bourgeois philosophical schools (neo-Kantianism, Machism, etc.).

Lenin set out to defend dialectical and historical materialism and, in so doing, creatively and comprehensively developed it, raising it to a new level, which should be defined as the *Leninist stage in the development of the philosophy of Marxism.*

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Our Programme*, Vol. 4, pp. 211-12.

Lenin's distinctive qualities as a theoretician are the revolutionary boldness with which he posed and solved the new theoretical problems raised in the course of history, his determination to test theoretical propositions in the fire of revolutionary practice, his repudiation of obsolete propositions that do not stand this test, and his hostility towards and intolerance of revisionism, of retreat from the principles of Marxist theory.

Marx and Engels, who evolved their theory in the struggle against the predominant idealist view of human history, of people, of classes or parties, put the main emphasis on material production, on economic relations as the determining factor. In the age of the revolutionary assault on capitalism the first requirement was naturally to develop the views of Marx and Engels on the role of social consciousness, ideas and ideology, the subjective factor in the development of society. This was also needed because the bourgeois ideologists and opportunists in the working-class movement were interpreting Marxism in the spirit of vulgar economism, which regarded the social process as something that occurred purely automatically, without the active participation.

In one of his first works, *What the "Friends of the People" Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats*, Lenin criticised the subjectivist interpretation of social phenomena by the Narodniks, who regarded the activity of "critically thinking" individuals as the dominant force in the historical process. He showed that what Marxism had to say on social-economic formations, on the supersession of one mode of production by another as the basis of the historical process, did not rule out recognition of the decisive role of the masses, of classes, in history; rather it allowed us to find out under what conditions the activity of the outstanding historical personality carrying out its aims and purposes would be successful.

In his work, *The Economic Content of Narodism and the Criticism of It in Mr. Struve's Book*, Lenin showed that Marxist philosophy, which reveals the objective laws of social development, has nothing in common with bourgeois objectivism, which ignores the role of the conscious political activity of classes and parties. "...On the one hand, the materialist is more consistent than the objectivist, and gives profounder and fuller effect to his objectivism. He does not limit himself to speaking of the necessity of a process, but ascertains exactly what social-economic formation gives the process its content, *exactly what class* determines this necessity... On the other hand, materialism includes partisanship, so to speak, and enjoins the direct and open adoption of the standpoint of a definite

social group in any assessment of events."[1]

Lenin paid much attention to criticism of the theory of spontaneity in the working-class movement. In his book *What Is to Be Done?* and other works he offered scientific arguments to show the importance of the revolutionary theory, the socialist consciousness which the Marxist party brought to the spontaneous working-class movement. "Without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement."[2] This conclusion of Lenin's had not only direct political but also general sociological significance, because it emphasised the dependence of fundamental social change on the activity of classes, armed with progressive ideas. Lenin's thesis is naturally of great importance to the working-class movement in the developed capitalist countries where reformist, trade-unionist ideology holds dominant positions in the movement.

In his philosophical work, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, Lenin gave a profound analysis of the revolution in natural science, particularly in physics at the turn of the century, a revolution initiated by the discovery of radioactivity, electrons, and the complex structure of atoms, which had previously been considered the ultimate, indivisible "bricks of the Universe". This revolution had substantially changed scientific notions of matter, motion, space, time, etc. The new scientific discoveries had clashed with the old concepts, which had seemed indisputable and had reigned unchallenged in science for centuries. From this fact many scientists had drawn the conclusion that the objects with which the old traditional concepts were connected (the atom as a material formation, the space-time qualities of things, etc.), had no real existence and were merely specifically human, subjective means of systematising and co-ordinating sense perceptions. Not only the cognitive value of scientific theories, but also man's ability to perceive the world were called in question.

Criticising there idealist conclusions drawn from the latest discoveries of physics, Lenin developed the dialectical-materialist understanding of matter and showed that its physical, chemical and other properties discovered by the sciences were specific characteristics of objective reality, which existed independently of consciousness. The concept of objective reality as an epistemological definition of matter cannot be reduced to its physical and other properties, cannot become obsolete, whatever changes may occur in our knowledge of the properties of matter, that is to say, of reality

[1] V. I. Lenin, *The Economic Content of Narodism and the Criticism of It in Mr. Struve's Book*, Vol. 1, p. 401.

[2] V. I. Lenin, *What Is to Be Done?*, Vol. 5, p. 369.

independent of the consciousness. In other words, the discovery of new properties of matter, of hitherto unknown material structures or phenomena, presupposes their existence outside and independent of consciousness, of cognition, their distinctness from the spiritual, the non-material, the subjective.

Having drawn these general conclusions from the latest scientific discoveries, Lenin went on to develop the dialectical-materialist theory of knowledge. He showed that the modification of established scientific notions under the influence of new discoveries did not deprive these notions of all objective truth, but rather attested to the complex and contradictory character of the cognitive process, the relativity of our knowledge.

Lenin's *Philosophical Notebooks*, which form a continuation and further elaboration of the basic theses set forth in his *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, are of tremendous significance for the development of Marxist philosophy. In the latter book Lenin concentrates on the basic problems of philosophical materialism, while in the *Philosophical Notebooks* he gives us some splendid examples of how to elaborate the laws and categories of materialist dialectics. The principle which Lenin formulated of the unity of dialectics, logic and the theory of knowledge in Marxist philosophy, his analysis of the basic elements of dialectics, his explanation of the epistemological roots of idealism and the contradictory character of the reflection of reality in scientific abstractions, his programme for the further development of the theory of knowledge of dialectical materialism—all this is an invaluable contribution to Marxist philosophy.

In his article "On the Significance of Militant Materialism", which may be regarded as his philosophical testament, Lenin gives grounds for building up an alliance between Marxist philosophers and natural scientists designed to further the creative development of dialectical materialism and improve the methodology of natural science. With this in mind he points out the need for the critical and creative assimilation of the progressive materialist and dialectical traditions of the past, particularly the atheistic theories of the French materialists of the 18th century and Hegel's dialectics.

Not only did Lenin vindicate dialectical and historical materialism in the struggle with its opponents, not only did he develop Marxist philosophy in all its aspects, he also applied it in analysing the new epoch—the epoch of imperialism, of imperialist wars and socialist revolutions, and the building of the new society; he thus answered the questions posed by the development of capitalism and by the world revolutionary movement.

Lenin's book, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, and

the works connected with it (on the First World War, the collapse of the Second International, on the question of nationalities, on the prospects of socialist revolution and the new alignment of class forces) contain a searching dialectical analysis of the new epoch and reveal the laws and tendencies of development of monopoly capitalism. On this basis Lenin draws a conclusion that is of the greatest importance for the revolutionary working-class movement and for the work of the Communist Party, the conclusion that a socialist revolution may be first victorious in some countries, or even in one country taken separately. Lenin's writings on the laws of development of the new socialist society, the relationship in this process of politics and economics, the special role of the Soviet socialist state, of socialist consciousness, of political and ideological guidance by the Communist Party, and of the communist education of the working people, are all outstanding contributions to Marxist theory.

In revisionist circles today attempts are made to belittle Lenin's role in the development of Marxism, and particularly Marxist philosophy. The revisionists speak of the need to abolish the "monopoly of Lenin and Leninism" in the interpretation of Marxism, ignoring the fact that Leninism is not an interpretation but a development of Marxism, that without Leninism the theory of Marx and Engels cannot correspond to contemporary historical conditions, which naturally could not have been reflected in the works of the founders of Marxism. In proclaiming the slogan "Back to Marx" the revisionists virtually repudiate the new element that was added to the treasury of Marxism by Lenin, his associates and followers.

The revisionists' claim that Leninism is a purely Russian phenomenon demonstrates their obvious failure to understand the historical process of the development of Marxism. In fact, however, Leninism was a generalisation of the experience and practical struggle of the working people of all countries. Lenin wrote that Russia had learned Marxism through suffering in tremendous battles, and through comparing its experience of the revolutionary movement with the experience of the revolutionary movement of other countries. Leninism is therefore not one of the possible "interpretations" of Marxism, but the only true and consistent development of revolutionary Marxism applicable to the epoch of imperialism and socialist revolutions, the epoch of the transition from capitalism to socialism.

The deep-going revolutionary process in which capitalism is superseded by socialism, the appearance on the historical scene of broad masses of the people as the true creators of history, the

emergence of a new socio-economic formation, a new society, with its inherent laws of development—all this was the most radical test of Marxist-Leninist theory and at the same time stimulated broad theoretical generalisations which enriched this theory and raised it to a new level. "A Marxist-Leninist party," the 26th Congress of the CPSU noted, "cannot fulfil its role if it does not give due attention to putting into proper perspective all that is taking place, to generalising new phenomena, *to creatively developing Marxist-Leninist theory.*"[1]

Concerning the results of the Conference of CC Secretaries of the Communist and Workers' Parties on international and ideological questions (November 3-4, 1981), Leonid Brezhnev stressed that it was important for the fraternal parties to work together on the problems of theory and ideology. The conference noted the need for more fundamental mutual study, creative use and popularisation of the experience and achievements of the countries where socialism exists as a reality with a view to developing and strengthening all-round cooperation between them. Another reason for pooling efforts to develop Marxist-Leninist theory is to ensure successful diplomatic activity by the fraternal countries and make their propaganda more effective.

The urge to tackle fundamental problems creatively on a joint basis springs from objective causes.

A social picture of the modern world in all its complexity and with all its contradictory elements cannot be built up without studying the creative contribution to Marxism-Leninism made by the Marxist-Leninist parties of the developed capitalist countries, particularly such citadels of imperialism as the United States and Britain, where the forces of peace, democracy and socialism are directly confronted by the most powerful, organised, experienced and reactionary adversary, where the latest trends in the development of imperialism and the capitalist system as a whole and the anti-imperialist struggle are formed, and where a search is being made for ways of ensuring peace, democracy and socialism consonant with the specific national features of these countries.

The creative development of theory should be understood as consistent development and enrichment of all its components—philosophy, political economy and scientific communism.

As in any science there are in dialectical and historical materialism quite a number of propositions that need to be further develop-

[1] *Documents and Resolutions. The 26th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.* Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, Moscow, 1981, p. 100.

ed, made more concrete, verified in the light of the latest scientific information; fresh problems arise, particularly in the theory of knowledge and in the social field.

In present-day conditions it is particularly important to go further into the problems of materialist dialectics and to analyse the dialectics of the contemporary stage in world history, without which there can be no deep-going philosophical comprehension of the major social conflicts of the period, particularly to study the logic and mechanism of coexistence, the interconnection and struggle between its two opposing trends—towards universal peace or towards nuclear disaster. There will have to be deeper investigation of the specific operation of the general patterns of development of socio-economic formations at the contemporary stage, the interaction of the basis and superstructure, and other problems of historical materialism.

The vigorous advance of science, the current scientific and technological revolution, particularly the discoveries in quantum mechanics, nuclear physics, cybernetics, molecular biology, and so on, demand both rethinking, further development and concretising of the traditional philosophical problems and categories as well as the elaboration of new ones. Without further development of the philosophy of Marxism-Leninism, without perfecting and enriching its categories it is impossible to understand in any depth the new phenomena arising in society, to understand the specific nature of the present age.

The building of communist society gives increasing prominence to the problems of the all-round development of the individual, to questions of the dialectics of the individual and the social, the social and the anthropological. The problem of man, which in the period of struggle for the victory of socialism meant liberating man from exploitation, acquires in the conditions of a victorious socialist society that is building communism new implications connected with the development of human personality, the widening of the freedom and responsibility of the citizen of socialist society, his ideological convictions, and so on.

Thus we see that the problems of dialectical and historical materialism are constantly being renewed. The old, traditional questions acquire new aspects that demand specialised research. Questions that have been solved in relation to the level of knowledge that existed in the past, reappear as problems requiring fresh investigation.

Marxist-Leninist philosophy does not rest on its laurels; in alliance with the natural and social sciences, in close connection with the historical experience and practice of communist construction, it moves forward, to new scientific problems and new solutions.

DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM

Chapter III

MATTER AND THE BASIC FORMS OF ITS EXISTENCE

One result of the historical development of science and social historical practice has been to prove the materiality of the universe, its uncreatability and indestructibility, its eternal existence in time and infinity in space, its inexhaustible self-development, which necessarily leads, at certain stages, to the emergence of life and of sentient beings. Through them matter becomes capable of knowing the laws of its own existence and development. What then, are the basic properties of matter, the forms of its existence? What general laws of development may it be said to possess? We shall now attempt a systematic expositon of the contemporary answers to these questions.

1. The Philosophical Understanding of Matter

In the world around us we observe countless numbers of diverse objects and phenomena. Have they anything in common? What is their nature? On what are they based? The various attempts to answer these questions led historically to the concept of the *substance* of all things. Substance was understood as the universal primary foundation of all things, their final essence. While objects and phenomena might appear and disappear, substance could neither be created nor destroyed, it merely changed the form of its existence, moving from one state to another. It was the cause of itself and the basis of all change, the most fundamental and stable layer of reality. The adoption by substance of a certain form signified the emergence of something with a quality corresponding to that form.

The very shaping of philosophy as a form of social consciousness is related to the appearance of the idea of substance and the unity of the world around us, the law-governed interconnection of the phenomena of reality.

In their materialist theories the philosophers of the Milesian school in ancient Greece elevated concrete forms of reality to the rank of substance. For Phales substance was water, for Anaximenes air, for others it was earth, and these substances were thought to be

capable of turning into one another. In the philosophy of Heraclitus substance was fire, which formed the sun, stars and all other bodies, and determined the eternal changing of the world. For Anaximander substance was an infinite and indefinite material which he called *apeiron*, eternal in time, inexhaustible in structure and constantly changing the forms of its existence.

None of these notions, however, gave expression to the idea of universality and conservation of substance in a consistent and non-contradictory form. Not one of the four substantial "first principles" possessed the required universality and stability, and the idea of *apeiron* was too vague and allowed of too many interpretations. The atomic theory of substance proposed by Leucippus and Democritus (5th century B.C.) and subsequently developed by Epicurus (3rd century B.C.) and Lucretius (1st century B.C.) was free of these defects. This theory allowed the existence of primary elementary particles called *atoms*, which could neither be created nor destroyed, were in constant motion, and differed from one another in weight, form and disposition in bodies. It was thought that the differences in the qualities of various bodies were determined by differences in the number of atoms composing them, by differences in their shape, mutual disposition and velocity. The number of atoms in the universe was infinite, their vortices formed stars like the sun, and also planets, and certain favourable combinations of atoms resulted in the emergence of living beings and man himself.

Atomic theory was the first to propose in a concrete and definite form the *principle of the conservation of matter* as the principle of the indestructibility of atoms. It was this concreteness and definiteness in expressing the idea of conservation of material substance that was to give atoms a place in all subsequent materialist theories. From the idea of the conservation and absoluteness of matter there necessarily followed the thesis that the universe was eternal and infinite, that matter was primary in relation to mind, to human consciousness, and that all phenomena were in some way dependent on laws. Belief in the materiality of the universe and the obedience of all phenomena to certain laws of nature gave the supporters of atomic materialism confidence in the boundless potentialities of man's reason, in his ability to find consistent explanations for all phenomena.

In the philosophy and natural science of modern times atomic theory was further elaborated in the works of Newton, Gassendi, Boyle, Lomonosov, Hobbes, Holbach, Diderot and other thinkers. It provided the basis for explanations of the nature of heat, diffusion, conductivity, and many chemical phenomena. It contributed

to the *corpuscular theory of light.* But while science was still undeveloped, there were very many phenomena that atomic theory was unable to explain; nor could it deduce from the assumed properties and laws of motion of atoms the specific features of living organisms, the functions of the human organism and a multitude of other phenomena of nature and society. It must be admitted that even in contemporary science the majority of known phenomena still have no causal and structural explanations. In contrast to atomic theory there appeared various idealist theories that elevated divine will, universal reason, absolute spirit and so on to the rank of the universal substance. These theories separated the mental attributes of the human brain from the brain itself and set them up as the Absolute, as Universal Reason, creating matter, space and time. But this idealist and the closely related religious understanding of substance made no progress in solving the question of the essence of the universe because they merely substituted one unknown for another, even more mysterious unknown, such as the divine Universal Reason or Absolute Spirit, which were supernatural and beyond human perception. Neither idealism nor religion ever provided a natural, rational explanation of the universe; they merely created the illusion of such an explanation. On the other hand, the materialist philosophers always set out to explain phenomena by natural causes and see them as a result of the operation of objective laws of the motion of matter. Materialism means understanding nature and the world as they are, without supernatural additions, that is to say, with the greatest degree of objectivity and authenticity possible at the time.

The soundness of this approach to explaining the world has been confirmed by the development of science, which has consistently overthrown all religious and idealist notions of the universe. The landmarks on this road were the discovery of the structure of the solar system and the Galaxy, the discovery by methods of spectral analysis of the chemical composition of the sun and other stars, the establishing of general laws of motion of various cosmic bodies, the geological history of the earth, and the laws of development of flora and fauna. It was the discovery of the law of the conservation of energy, of the unitary cellular structure of all living organisms, and Darwin's theory of the evolution of biological species that provided the foundation on which Marx and Engels built dialectical materialism.

As science advanced, the limitations of the metaphysical method of thought that dominated the minds of many scientists became increasingly apparent. The mechanistic picture of the universe that had prevailed in the natural science of the 17th-19th centuries had absolutised the known mechanical laws of motion, the physical

properties and states of matter. They were applied both to the microcosm and to all the conceivable space-time scales of the universe. The unity of the world was understood as homogeneity and uniformity of structure, as endless repetition of the same stars, planets and other known forms of matter, obeying eternal and immutable laws of motion. It seemed that absolute truth was not far away, that the fundamental laws of the universe had been revealed and only technical difficulties prevented scientists from deducing the properties of various chemical compounds and even living organisms from the dynamic laws of the motion of atoms. Pierre Laplace, an outstanding scientist of the 19th century, wrote:

"A mind that for one given instant could know all the forces by which nature is animated and the respective positions of the beings that compose it, if, in addition, it were broad enough to submit these data to analysis, would encompass in one and the same formula the movements of the greatest bodies in the universe and those of the lightest atoms; nothing would remain uncertain for it and both the future and the past would present themselves to its vision."[1]

But nature turned out to be far more complex than many physicists and philosophers had thought. In the second half of the 19th century research by Faraday and Maxwell established the laws of change of qualitatively new form of matter—the *electromagnetic field*. And these laws proved to be incompatible with those of classical mechanics.

The turn of the century saw a new series of discoveries: radioactivity, complex chemical atoms, electrons, the dependence of mass on velocity, and quantum mechanics. It was established that some laws of mechanics did not apply to the structure of atoms or the motion of electrons, and the space-time properties of bodies were shown to be dependent on their velocity. The mechanical picture of the universe and the metaphysical understanding of matter were thrown into a state of crisis. But the idealists, and particularly the exponents of empirio-criticism, saw this as a crisis of all physics and even as the collapse of materialism as a whole, which they indentified with the mechanical view of nature. The radioactive disintegration of atoms was interpreted as the "disappearance" of matter, the conversion of matter into energy.

These views were effectively criticised by Lenin in his book *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*. Basing himself on the works of Marx and Engels, Lenin showed that the new scientific discoveries

1 Laplace, *Essai philosophique sur les probabilités*, Bruxelles, Société Belge de Librairie, Hauman et Compe, 1840, pp. 3-4.

indicated that only dialectical materialism could provide a proper philosophical foundation and methodology for modern science. "The destructibility of the atom, its inexhaustibility, the mutability of all forms of matter and of its motion, have always been the stronghold of dialectical materialism."[1]

Working on the basis of scientific data on the structural heterogeneity and inexhaustibility of matter, Lenin formulated a generalised philosophical concept: "Matter is a philosophical category denoting the objective reality which is given to man by his sensations, and which is copied, photographed and reflected by our sensations, while existing independently of them."[2]

This definition of matter is organically connected with the materialist answer to the basic problem of philosophy. It indicates the objective source of our knowledge as matter, and not that matter is unknowable. At the same time, unlike previous philosophical systems, dialectical materialism does not reduce matter merely to certain of its *forms*, to particles of substance, sensuously perceptible bodies, and so on. Matter embraces the whole infinite diversity of the objects and systems of nature, which exist and move in space and time and possess an inexhaustible variety of properties. Our sense organs can perceive only an insignificant part of these actually existing forms of matter, but thanks to the construction of increasingly powerful instruments and measuring apparatus people are constantly extending the frontiers of the known world.

Lenin's definition of matter takes in not only the objects that are known to contemporary science, but even those that may be discovered in the future; hence its great methodological importance. For any material formation to exist it must have objective reality in relation to other bodies, be objectively connected and interacting with them, be an element in the general process of change and development of matter.

The concept of matter as objective reality characterises matter together with all its properties, forms of motion, laws of existence, and so on. But this does not mean that every arbitrarily selected fragment of objective reality must be matter. It may also be a concrete *property* of matter, a certain law or form of its motion, inseparable from matter and yet not identical to it. In the structure of objective reality we must distinguish concrete material objects and systems (forms of matter), the properties of these material systems (general and particular), the forms of their interaction and

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, Vol. 14, p. 281.
[2] Ibid., p. 130.

motion, and laws of existence possessing varying degrees of universality. Thus, motion, space, time, the laws of nature possess objective reality, and yet they cannot be regarded as matter. Matter exists in the form of an infinite diversity of concrete objects and systems, each of which *possesses* motion, structure, connections, interactions, space-time and many other general and particular properties. Matter does not exist outside concrete objects and systems, and in this sense there is no "matter as such" understood as a primary and structureless substance. In dialectical materialism the concept of substance has undergone radical changes in comparison with the ways it was understood in previous philosophy. Dialectical materialism recognises the substantiality of matter, but only in the sense that matter (and not consciousness, not absolute spirit, not divine reason, etc.) is the one universal basis, the substratum for the various properties, connections, forms of motion and laws. But there are no grounds for allowing the existence of any primary structureless substance *within* matter itself, as the deepest and most fundamental layer of reality. Every form of matter (including micro-objects) possesses a complex structure, a variety of internal and external connections, and the ability to change into other forms.

Lenin wrote: "The 'essence' of things, or 'substance' is *also* relative; it expresses only the degree of profundity of man's knowledge of objects; and while yesterday the profundity of this knowledge did not go beyond the atom, and today does not go beyond the electron and ether, dialectical materialism insists on the temporary, relative, approximate character of all these *milestones* in the knowledge of nature gained by the progressing science of man. The electron is as *inexhaustible* as the atom, nature is infinite...."[1]

A scientific theory can be only an open-ended system of knowledge with unlimited prospects of development.

Objects or things are sometimes regarded as the sum of their various properties. Matter may also be regarded in the same way, but it must not be reduced merely to its properties. The latter never exist by themselves, without a material substratum; they are always inherent in certain definite objects.

Matter always has a certain organisation; it exists in the form of specific material systems. A *system* is an internally (or externally) ordered plurality of interconnected (or interacting) elements. The connection between the elements of a system is always more powerful, stable and intrinsically necessary than the connection between any of its elements and the environment, and the elements

[1] Ibid., p. 262.

of other systems. The internal orderedness of a system is expressed in the set of laws governing the connections and interactions between its elements. Each law expresses a certain order or type of connection. The *structure* of a system is the sum of the internal connections between its *elements*, and also the laws of these connections. Structure is an indispensable element of all existing systems.

The concepts of system and element are correlative. Any system may be an element of an even larger system. Similarly an element may be a system if we are concerned with its structure, with deeper structural levels of matter. But this correlativity of concepts does not mean that systems have been invented by man merely as a convenient means of classifying phenomena. Systems exist objectively, as ordered integral formations.

The range of present-day knowledge of matter extends from 10^{-15}cm (the core of the nucleon) to 10^{28}cm (approximately 13,000 million light years). All matter within these limits, i.e., all known matter, possesses a structural organisation. Tentatively one may identify the following basic types of material systems and the corresponding structural levels of matter.

In inanimate nature, elementary particles (including anti-particles) and fields, atomic nuclei, atoms, molecules, aggregates of molecules, macroscopic bodies, geological formations, the earth and other planets, the sun and other stars, local groups of stars, the Galaxy, systems of galaxies, and the Metagalaxy, which is only one of the systems of the infinite universe.

In animate nature, biosystems, intraorganic and superorganic. The former include the DNA and RNA molecules, as vehicles of heredity, complexes of protein molecules, cells (consisting of subsystems), tissues, organs, functional systems (neural, blood circulation, digestive, gas exchange, etc.) and the organism as a whole. Superorganic systems include families of organisms, colonies, and various populations—species, biological communities, geographical landscapes, and the whole biosphere.

In society, the types of intersecting systems are also numerous: man, the family, various groups (production staffs, teaching bodies, research teams, sports teams, etc.), communities, associations and organisations, parties, classes, states, systems of states, and society as a whole.

This is a very general and far from complete classification because at every structural level large numbers of additional interpenetrating systems based on various forms of connections and interconnections of their elements may be identified.

The factors determining the integrity of systems are constantly

becoming more complex as matter ascends in its development. In inanimate nature the integrity of systems is determined by the nuclear (in atomic nuclei), electromagnetic and gravitational forces of their connections. A system may be accounted integral if the energy of the interaction between its elements *exceeds* the total kinetic energy of these elements plus the energy of external influences tending to destroy the system. Otherwise the system either does not come about or disintegrates.

In animate nature, integrity is determined not only by these factors, but also by information processes of connection and control, self-regulation and reproduction at various structural levels.

The integrity of social systems is determined by numerous social connections and relations (economic, political, social-class, national, ethnic, cultural, family, etc.).

The most accurate and detailed classification of the basic forms of matter is that based on types of material systems and the corresponding levels of matter. There is also a widespread classification of forms of matter according to fundamental physical properties. This classification begins with *substance*, comprising all particles, macroscopic bodies and other systems possessing finite rest mass. Then comes objectively existing *anti-substance*, comprising anti-particles (anti-protons, positrons, anti-neutrons, etc.) and sometimes *incorrectly* called anti-matter. Atoms and molecules made up of anti-particles may in the absence of ordinary forms of substance be stable and form macroscopic bodies and even cosmic systems ("anti-worlds"). In these bodies the laws of motion and development of matter would be the same as those that pertain in the world around us.

In addition there are what may be termed *insubstantial* forms of matter—electromagnetic and gravitational fields, and also neutrinos and anti-neutrinos of various types, none of which possess finite rest mass.

Field and substance should not be opposed to each other because fields exist in the structure of all substantial systems and help to hold them together.

The dialectical-materialist theory of matter and the forms of its existence provides a methodological foundation for scientific research, for the elaboration of an integral scientific world view and the interpretation of scientific discoveries consistent with reality. It is constantly extending its vision and insight with the advance of scientific knowlege, which seeks an ever fuller and deeper reflection of the laws of the existence of matter.

2. Motion and Its Basic Forms

As we get to know the world around us, we see that there is nothing in it that is absolutely stationary and immutable; everything is in motion and passing from one form into another. Elementary particles, atoms and molecules move within all material objects, every object interacts with its environment, and this interaction is bound to involve motion of some kind or another.

Any body, even a body that is stationary in relation to the earth, moves together with it around the sun, and together with the sun in relation to the other stars of the Galaxy, which in turn moves in relation to other stellar systems, and so on. Nowhere is there absolute equilibrium, rest and immobility; all rest and equilibrium are relative, are actually a state of motion. The stability of a body's structure and external form depends on the interaction of the micro-particles composing it, and all interaction taking place in space and time is motion; conversely, all motion includes the interaction of the various elements of matter.

Taken in its most general form, motion means the same thing as *change*, as any transition from one state to another. *Motion is the universal attribute, the mode of existence of matter. Nowhere in the world can there be matter without motion, just as there can be no motion without matter.*

This important proposition may be proved by the rule of contraries. Let us suppose the existence of a certain form of matter possessing no motion whatever, internal or external. Since interaction involves motion, this hypothetical matter could have no internal or external connections or interactions. But in that case it would also be structureless and devoid of any elements because without interacting the latter could not unite with each other and produce this form of matter. Nothing could arise out of this hypothetical matter because it would have no connections or interactions. It would be totally unable to reveal its existence in relation to any other bodies because it would have no power to influence them. It would possess no properties because every property is the result of internal and external connections and interactions and is also revealed in interactions. And finally, it would in principle be unknowable to us since all cognition of external objects can take place only through their influence on our sense organs and scientific instruments. We should have no reason to suppose the existence of such matter because no information from it would ever reach us. If we add up all these "non-features" we get a pure nothing, a fiction that has absolutely no correspondence with reality. Consequently, if any possible objects of the external world possess certain

properties or structure, reveal their existence in relation to other bodies and may in principle be cognised, all this is the result of their intrinsic motion and interaction with the environment.

Since it is inseparably bound up with motion and possesses intrinsic activity, matter does not need any external, divine "first push" to set it in motion (the metaphysical conception of a "first push" was at one time maintained by certain metaphysical philosophers, who regarded matter as an inert mass).

Matter is the substratum of all change; there is no such thing as motion divorced from matter, just as there is no energy without matter. The possibility of the existence of motion without a substratum, the convertion of matter into energy was allowed by the advocates of *energism* (particularly the German scientist Wilhelm Ostwald, whose views were criticised by Lenin in *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*). These philosophers identified mass with matter, then, mass with energy, and eventually drew the conclusion that matter and energy were the same thing.

The spirit of energism persists in the reasoning of some contemporary scientists, who on the basis of the formula $E=mc^2$ (when E is energy, m mass, and c the velocity of light) infer the equivalence of matter and energy. The conversion of particles and anti-particles (when interacting) into photons is regarded as the destruction ("annihilation") of matter and its conversion into "pure energy". In reality, however, photons, or quanta of an electro-magnetic field, are a particular form of matter in motion. Matter is not destroyed but passes from one form to another in a process strictly conforming to the laws of the conservation of mass, energy, electrical charge, impulse, moment of impulse and some other properties of micro-particles.

Energy in general cannot exist separately from matter and is always one of the most important *properties* of matter. Energy is a quantitative measure of motion expressing the internal activity of matter, the ability of material systems to perform certain work or bring about changes in the external environment on the basis of internal structural changes. In this case from a bound state (corresponding to rest mass) energy passes into active forms, for example, the energy of irradiation.

Nature confronts us with innumerable qualitatively differing systems, each of which possesses its own, specific kind of motion. Only a small number of these motions, which may be subdivided into a series of basic *forms* of motion, are known to present-day science. These are the modes of existence and functioning of material systems at the corresponding structural levels. The basic forms of motion include sets of processes that obey general laws

(varying for the various forms of motion).

The classification of the basic forms of motion owes much to Engels, who in his *Dialectics of Nature* spoke of the existence of the following forms of motion: *mechanical* (change of place in space); *physical* (electromagnetism, gravitation, heat, sound, change in the aggregate states of substances, etc.); *chemical* (conversion of the atoms and molecules of substances); *biological* (metabolism in living organisms); and *social* (social change, and also thought processes). This classification retains its significance even today. It proceeds from the principle of the historical development of matter and the principle that higher forms of motion cannot be qualitatively reduced to lower forms.

In the last hundred years science has discovered a great number of new phenomena in the microcosm and the macrocosm: the motion and mutations of elementary particles, processes in atomic nuclei, in stars, in supersolid states of matter, expansion of the Metagalaxy, and so on.

Of the basic forms of motion today we must first mention those that are to be found at all known structural levels of matter and in all spatial scales. They fall into three groups: (1) *spatial displacement*, the mechanical motion of the atoms, molecules, macroscopic and cosmic bodies; dissemination of electromagnetic and gravitational waves (non-trajectory); motion of elementary particles; (2) *electromagnetic interaction*, and (3) *gravitational interaction*.

Then come the forms of motion that appear only at certain structural levels in inanimate nature, in animate nature, and in society. In *inanimate nature* these are primarily the interactions and mutations of elementary particles and atomic nuclei. The various kinds of nuclear energy are a particular manifestation of this form of motion. As a result of the redistribution of connections between atoms and molecules and changes in the structure of molecules, some substances turn into others. This process is the chemical form of motion.

We must also mention the forms of motion of macroscopic bodies: heat, processes of crystallisation, changes in aggregate states, structural changes in solids, fluids, gases and plasma. The geological form of motion comprises a complex of physico-chemical processes connected with the formation of various minerals, ores, and other substances in conditions of high temperature and pressure. In the stars there appear such forms of motion as self-supporting thermo-nuclear reactions and formation of chemical elements (particularly during explosions of new and supernew stars). With cosmic bodies of great mass and density such processes as gravitational collapse and conversion to supersolid states may take

place. This happens when a body's gravitational field becomes so powerful as to prevent all particles of matter and electro-magnetic radiation from escaping (the so-called "black holes"). On the scale of the macrocosm we are witnessing a grandiose expansion of the Metagalaxy, which appears to be a stage in the form of motion of this gigantic material system. Each structural level of matter has its own forms of motion and functioning of the corresponding material systems.

The forms of motion in *animate nature* comprise processes occurring both within living organisms and in superorganic systems. Life is the mode of existence of protein bodies and nucleic acids which consists in metabolism, in the constant exchange of substances between the organism and the environment, the processes of reflection and self-regulation, and the reproduction of organisms.

All living organisms are open systems. Constantly exchanging substance and energy with the environment, the living organism recreates its structure and functions, and keeps them relatively stable. This metabolism leads to the constant self-renewal of the cellular composition of tissues.

Life is a system of forms of motion and comprises processes of interaction, change and development in superorganic biological systems—colonies of organisms, species, bioceonoses, biogeoceonoses, and the whole biosphere.

The highest stage in the development of matter on earth is human society with its inherent social forms of motion. These forms constantly become more complex as society advances. They comprise various manifestations of people's purposeful activity, all social changes and forms of interaction between various social systems—from man to the state and society as a whole. A manifestation of the social forms of motion may be seen also in the processes of reflection of reality in thought, which are based on synthesis of all the physico-chemical and biological forms of motion in the human brain.

All forms of the motion of matter are closely interconnected. This interconnection reveals itself primarily in the historical development of matter and in the emergence of higher forms of motion on the basis of the relatively lower. The higher forms of motion synthesise these lower forms. Thus the human organism functions on the basis of the interaction of the closely related physico-chemical and biological forms of motion, while at the same time human beings are *individuals*, vehicles of social forms of motion.

In studying the interrelations of the forms of motion it is important to avoid separating the higher from the lower forms or mechanically reducing the one to the other. If one separates them

there is no possibility of explaining the origin and structural peculiarities of the higher forms. On the other hand, ignoring the specific qualities of the higher forms of motion and crudely reducing them to lower forms leads to mechanicism and oversimplification.

Knowledge of the relationships between the forms of motion provides an important clue to the material unity of the world, the specific features of the historical development of matter. Studying matter is largely a question of studying the forms of its motion and if we could know all about motion we should also know about matter in all its manifestations. But this process is infinite.

Discovery of the laws governing the interrelationship of the forms of motion guides us towards knowledge of the essence of life and other higher forms of motion, towards modelling the functions of complex systems, including the human brain, and technological systems of increasing complexity. Scientific and technical advance opens up boundless prospects in this direction.

3. Space and Time

All the objects in the world around us possess certain dimensions, extension in various directions, and move in relation to one another or, together with the earth, in relation to other space bodies. Similarly all objects arise and change in time. *Space and time are universal forms of the existence of all material systems and processes.* No object exists outside space and time, just as space and time cannot exist by themselves, outside matter in motion.

We often look upon space and time as universal *conditions* of the existence of bodies. This approach does not lead us into error as long as we are dealing only with concrete bodies and systems. Every body or system exists and moves in the spatial structure of an even larger system—the Galaxy, groups of galaxies, and so on. The emergence and the whole cycle of development of the smaller system manifests itself as a time stage in the development of the greater system of which it forms a part. The space and time of the latter are conditions for the development of any of the *subsystems* comprising it.

But this notion of space and time as conditions of existence becomes untenable when we move on to a consideration of matter as a whole. If we accepted it, we should have to acknowledge that besides matter there also existed space and time in which matter was somehow "immersed". In the past this approach led to conceptions of absolute space and time as the external conditions of the existence of matter (Newton). Space was regarded as an infinite

void containing all bodies and not depending on matter, and absolute time as a steady flow of duration in which everything appeared and disappeared, but which did not itself depend on any processes in the universe.

Scientific advance has exploded these notions. No such absolute space consisting of an infinite void exists. Everywhere there is matter in certain *forms* (substance, field and so on), and space is a universal *property* (attribute) of matter. Similarly there is no absolute time. Time is always indissolubly connected with motion and the development of matter. Space and time exist objectively and independently of consciousness, but not independently of matter. *Space is the form of existence of matter that expresses its extent and structure, the coexistence and interaction of elements in various material systems. Time is the form of the existence of matter characterising the duration of the existence of all objects and the sequence in which states of matter replace each other.* All properties of space and time depend on motion and the structural relations in material systems and must be inferred from them.

Of the properties of space and time we may single out the *universal*, which manifest themselves at all known structural levels of matter, and the *particular* and the *individual*, which inhere in only some states of matter or even individual objects. The universal properties are inseparably linked with other attributes of matter and the dialectical laws of its existence. They are of paramount importance for philosophy.

The main universal properties of space comprise extent, which signifies the location in relation to one another of various elements (sections, volumes), the possibility of adding to any given element some other element or of reducing the number of elements. Space without extent would exclude all possibility of quantitative change in its elements and also any structure of material formations. The fact that there are coexisting and interacting elements in material systems, is what gives the internal space of such systems extension. So extension is organically connected with the structure of systems.

The universal properties of space also include its inseparable connection with time and the motion of matter, and the dependence of structural relations in material systems.

Unity of continuity and discontinuity is inherent in space (or rather, the spatial properties of matter). Discontinuity is relative and reveals itself in the separate existence of material objects and systems, each of which has certain dimensions and limits. But material fields (electromagnetic, gravitational, etc.) extend continuously throughout all systems. The continuity of space also reveals itself in the spatial movement of bodies. A body moving towards a

certain place passes through the whole infinite sequence of elements of length between them. Thus, another feature of space is its cohesion; there are no "gaps" in it.

Space is three-dimensional, a fact that is organically connected with the structural nature of systems and their motion.

The extension of space is closely related to metrical relations, which express the specific connections of spatial elements, the order and quantitative laws of these connections. The metrical relations of the plane, the sphere, the pseudosphere (a figure that looks like a gramophone horn) and other surfaces are expressed in various types of geometry, Euclidean and non-Euclidean (Lobachevsky, Riemann). Possession of certain metrical properties is one of the universal characteristics of space.

Of the universal properties of time (or rather the temporal relations in material systems) we should mention its continuous connection with the extent and motion of matter, its duration, assymetry, irreversibility, non-cyclical nature, unity of continuity and discontinuity, cohesion, and dependence on structural relations in material systems.

Duration is the consistency of the existence of material objects, their conservation in a relatively stable form. Since the speed of change of any process is finite, duration is formed by the occurrence of one moment of time after another. It is similar to the extension of space and results from the conservation of matter and motion. This conservation also conditions the cohesion of time, its continuity, which is universal and absolute. Discontinuity is characteristic only of the duration of existence of concrete qualitative states of matter, each of which appears and disappears, passing into other forms. But the elements of matter of which they consist (elementary particles, for example) may not appear or disappear in this process but merely change their connections, forming different bodies. In this sense the discontinuity of the lifetime of matter is relative, while the continuity is absolute. This fact is expressed in the laws of the conservation of matter and its primary properties.

The assymetry or one-directionality of time indicates that it changes only from the past to the future, that such change is irreversible. In space one can move in any direction. In time movement towards the past is impossible; all change occurs in such a way that it brings about the next, future moment of time. States or cycles that have already occurred can never be absolutely and fully repeated. All cycles are relative and express only the fact that processes are more or less repeatable. But in every cycle there is always something new and time is always irreversible. This irreversibility of time is determined by the assymetry of cause-effect

relations, the general irreversibility of the process of the development of matter, in which new possibilities, qualitative states and trends are always appearing.

The development of science in this century has thrown new light on the connection of the properties of space and time with material processes. The theory of relativity has proved that as the velocity of bodies increases their dimensions relatively decrease in the direction of their motion and that all processes in them tend to slow down (in comparison with their speed in a state of relative rest). A slowing down of processes also occurs under the influence of very powerful gravitational fields created by large accumulations of substance. As a result, the spectral lines of radiation emitted by objects known as "quasars" (quasi-stellar objects) are shifted to the red side of the spectrum.

The influence of gravity gives rise to the "space curve", due to the effect of the distortion of light rays in gravitational fields. It is possible for the mass and density of a system to become so great that light rays begin to move on a closed circuit in its immediate vicinity. Such an effect would occur, for example, if the whole mass of the sun were concentrated in a globe 2.5 km in diameter.

In recent years similar phenomena have been observed in the Galaxy due to the effect of gravitational collapse (catastrophically rapid contraction of substance). At first it was assumed that such objects or phenomena (predicted in theory and known as "black holes") were absolutely closed because they did not emit any radiation. But it later became clear that they create a static gravitational field and absorb interstellar dust and gas from the surrounding space. When particles of matter fall on such a super-dense object they clash with each other causing powerful electromagnetic irradiation, which is registered by instruments on earth. This proves once again that there is no ground for assuming the existence of absolutely closed systems in space. In any case such systems would never reveal their existence in relation to other bodies and we should never receive any information about them. Thus there is no ground whatever for asserting that they exist.

The universal properties of space and time also include their infinity. Since matter is absolute, uncreatable and indestructible, it exists eternally. Any assumption that time is finite, that it must have a stop, inevitably leads to religious conclusions about the creation of the world and time by God, which has been totally disproved by all the findings of science and practice.

The infinity of time should not be understood as unlimited monotonous existence in certain similar forms and states. Matter has always been and always will be in an unfailing state of self-

development, which implies the endless appearance of qualitatively new forms, states, tendencies and laws of change. The infinity of time has not only a quantitative aspect (unlimited duration) but also a qualitative aspect, connected with the historical development of matter and its structural inexhaustibility.

Matter is also infinite in its spatial forms of existence. From the theoretical principles of cosmology and observed data it follows that the spectral lines of the galaxies have a shift towards the red side of the spectrum. This shift indicates that they are moving away from each other. The speed of this departure increases with distance and in the case of the objects observed that are farthest away achieves half the speed of light.

There are grounds for believing that this expansion is a local process and that in the Universe apart from our Galaxy there are countless other cosmic systems with all kinds of structural organisation and space-time properties. The infinity of space also has qualitative aspects connected with the structural heterogeneity of matter.

The process of discovering the material world includes the important element of studying the space-time properties and relations of bodies. Besides the universal properties of space and time that we have considered it is of great importance to know their particular properties. These include the concrete spatial forms and dimensions of material systems, their lifespan in units of terrestrial time, the rhythm of processes in systems, the metrical properties, the symmetry or assymmetry in the structure of a system, the relations of spatial similarity, and so on. All these properties are derivative of motion and the interaction of matter.

Research into space-time relations is carried on in one or another form by nearly all the sciences. Thus, biology gives precedence to the problems of rhythm in the various subsystems of living organisms ("biological clock") and the assymmetry of the molecules of animate substance in spatial structure.

In social life we observe an acceleration of development and today an ever increasing number of scientific and technical discoveries and social changes takes place per unit of physical time.

4. The Material Unity of the World

There is nothing in the world that is not a certain state of matter, one of its properties, a form of motion, a product of its historical development, that is not ultimately conditioned by material causes and interactions. Man himself is the most complex of all known

material systems and all manifestations of his activity, including the higher forms of mental reflection and creation, have a material origin and depend on social relations.

Awareness of the material unity of the world is a result of historical development of science and practice. At one time the contrasting of the earthly and heavenly spheres was widely accepted. All celestial phenomena were consigned to the latter, which was considered eternal and intransient, as opposed to the transient matter of Earth. The development of astronomy, physics and other sciences has disposed of these beliefs. The movements of the planets and other space bodies have been classified and their chemical composition investigated. By physical and chemical research we have learned to predict states of matter that do not occur on Earth or in the solar system—superdense states of matter and neutron stars, for example—and to explain in general terms the nature of the energy of the stars and the stages of their evolution. An ongoing process of integration of the sciences has helped to create an overall scientific picture of the world as moving and developing matter.

The exponents of religious idealist philosophies always inferred the unity of the world from a guiding divine will. In their view, God created this world and was its ultimate essence or substance. It was God who determined the universal connection and development of all things. This understanding of the unity of the world is the point of departure of contemporary neo-Thomism. This doctrine does not deny the objective reality and existence of matter but regards them as a secondary reality in relation to the higher reality of God.

In Hegel's system of objective idealism the unity of the world was based on the notion that all phenomena were a form of the other-being of the self-developing Absolute Spirit, which implied a divine universal reason.

But the religious idealist understanding of the world never advanced knowledge a single step because it merely substituted one unknown for another unknown, the divine will, the absolute spirit, and so on. Realistically minded scientists were never satisfied with this "explanation" and looked for natural material causes of all phenomena and tried to deduce them from the objective laws of nature. This gave a tremendous boost to the development of the natural sciences, which step by step unfolded a picture of the material unity of the world and the natural determinacy of all phenomena.

The works of the outstanding materialists of the past—Democritus, Epicurus, Lucretius, Bacon, Hobbes, Lomonosov, Holbach, Helvetius, Diderot, Feuerbach, Chernyshevsky and Herzen—made a profound study of the material unity of the world, its eternal

mutability and development, and the natural origin of all living beings and human society. Admittedly, these thinkers were unable to give a consistent materialist explanation of the driving forces and laws of development of society and ascribed them to human idealism. This defect of early materialism was overcome by Marxist philosophy. Marx and Engels evolved dialectical and historical materialism, a consistent monistic world outlook, which reveals the essence of natural and social phenomena on the basis of a unified system of principles. As the highest product of the development of nature society is a socially organised form of matter. Its development is determined primarily by material connections and relations: interaction with nature, progress in the mode of production of material values, perfection of material and spiritual culture, development of material means of communication (trade, transport, the press, the mass media, etc.). But the higher spiritual values also have their effect on social progress. The achievements of science, political opinions, moral and aesthetic principles reach the minds of the working masses and are embodied through the process of labour and the functioning of production in material values—new means of production, objects of everyday life, experimental and measuring instruments, the material means of controlling production, and works of art.

Dialectical-materialist monism offers a scientific and integral explanation of nature and society and provides a methodological basis for the investigation in depth of all new, hitherto unknown phenomena.

In the past some philosophers who considered themselves to be materialists, proposed their own special conceptions of the unity of the world. One such conception was evolved by Eugen Dühring, whose views were criticised by Engels in his book *Anti-Dühring*.

Dühring maintained that the unity of the world lay in the fact that it objectively existed, that it possessed being. He ignored the fundamental fact that theologists, the advocates of objective idealism, also recognise the existence of the world but regard it as secondary in relation to the higher, divine existence. This basic error was noted by Engels, who wrote: "The unity of the world does not consist in its being, although its being is a pre-condition of its unity, as it must certainly first *be* before it can be one.... The real unity of the world consists in its materiality, and this is proved not by a few juggled phrases, but by a long and wearisome development of philosophy and natural science."[1]

The unity of the world cannot be reduced merely to the homo-

[1] F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p. 60.

geneity of its physico-chemical composition or to the fact that all phenomena obey certain known physical laws. Owing to the operation of the universal law of the passing of quantitative into qualitative changes, each specific quality exists within certain limits, in finite space-time scales. It cannot be extrapolated to infinity. So every specific scientific theory has a limited sphere of application. The truth is always concrete and every scientific theory must of necessity be an open-ended system of knowledge.

Matter is infinitely diverse in its manifestation. As space-time scales change (increase or decrease) at certain stages there inevitably occur certain qualitative changes in particular properties, in forms of structural organisation, in the laws of the motion of matter. Many laws of the microcosm differ in quality from the laws of macroscopic phenomena and on the gigantic scale of the Universe there are states and processes of matter the theory of which has yet to be evolved.

Nevertheless, despite all the qualitative diversity and structural inexhaustibility of matter, the Universe is one. This unity manifests itself on a global scale in the absoluteness, substantiality and eternal nature of matter and its attributes; in the mutual connection and conditioning of all material systems and structural levels, in the natural determination of their properties, in the interchanging multiplicity of forms of matter in motion, in the correspondence between the universal laws of the conservation of matter and its basic properties.

The unity of the world also reveals itself in the historical development of matter, in the emergence of more complex forms of matter and motion on the basis of relatively less complicated forms. And finally, it finds expression in the operation of universal dialectical regularities of existence, which may be observed in the structure and development of all material systems.

The homogeneity of the physico-chemical composition of bodies, the universality of their quantitative laws of motion, the similarity in the structure and functions of systems, the resemblance of properties, which makes it possible to model complex systems and processes on the basis of simpler phenomena for the purpose of discovering fresh information about the world are local manifestations of universal unity.

The dialectical materialist theory of matter and its forms of existence is the foundation of Marxist-Leninist philosophy, the basis of its integrated monistic world outlook. It is of great importance as a method for modern science and helps us to integrate the sciences and evolve an integral conception of the world as moving and developing matter.

Chapter IV

CONSCIOUSNESS AS AN ATTRIBUTE OF HIGHLY ORGANISED MATTER

Man possesses the wonderful gift of consciousness, of mind, with its ability to reach back into the distant past, or probe the future, its world of dream and fantasy, its ability to penetrate into the realm of the unknown. What is consciousness? What are its origins and peculiar features?

1. Consciousness as a Function of the Human Brain

Man began to ponder the riddle of his consciousness a very long time ago. For many centuries the best minds of mankind have tried to discover the nature of consciousness, have wrestled with the questions of how inanimate matter at some stage in its development engenders animate matter, and how animate matter engenders consciousness. What is the structure and function of consciousness? What is the mechanism of the transition from sensation and perception to thought, from the sensuously concrete to the abstractly theoretical? How does the consciousness relate to the material physiological processes that occur in the cortex? These and many other closely related problems remained for a long time beyond the bounds of strictly objective scientific research.

Various idealist and religious interpretations of the phenomena of consciousness are widely held. According to these conceptions, consciousness is a manifestation of a certain non-material substance—the "soul", which is allegedly immortal and eternal, independent of matter in general and of the human brain in particular, and lives a life of its own. Unable to explain the natural causes of dreams, of fainting, of death and of various cognitive, emotional and volitional processes, the ancients arrived at false conclusions about these phenomena. Dreams, for instance, were interpreted as the impressions of the "soul" leaving the body during sleep and travelling to various places. Death was conceived as a form of sleep, when the "soul" for some unknown reason failed to return to the body that it has quitted. These naive fantastic beliefs were further developed and acquired a theoretical "substantiation" and consol-

idation in various idealist philosophical and theological systems. Any idealist system was bound in one way or another to proclaim consciousness (reason, idea, spirit) an independent supernatural essence, not only independent of matter but even creating the whole world and controlling its motion and development.

In contrast to these various idealist beliefs materialism proceeds from the fact that *consciousness is a function of the human brain, the essence of which lies in the reflection of reality*. At the same time the problem of consciousness has turned out to be extremely difficult for materialist philosophers and psychologists as well. Some materialists, baffled by the problem of the origin of consciousness, came to regard it as an attribute of matter, as its eternal property, inherent in all its forms, higher and lower. They declared all matter animate. This belief has been called *hylozoism* (from the Greek *hyle*—matter, and *zoe*—life).

Dialectical materialism proceeds from the fact that consciousness is an attribute not of any matter but of *highly organised matter*. Consciousness is connected with the activity of the human brain, with the specifically human, social way of life. As the founders of Marxism emphasised, consciousness can never be anything but consciously apprehended existence, and people's existence is the real process of their life.

The dialectical-materialist concept of consciousness is based on the principle of *reflection*, that is, the mental reproduction of the object in the brain of the individual in the form of sensations, perceptions, representations, propositions, inferences and concepts. The content of consciousness is ultimately determined by surrounding reality, and its material substratum, or vehicle, is the human brain.

In the course of evolution animals acquired the ability to mentally reflect external influences only when they developed a nervous system. The improvement of the mentality of animals under the influence of their changing way of life was closely connected with the development of their brain. Man's consciousness arose and is developing in close connection with the rise and development of the specifically human brain under the influence of labour activity, social relations and intercourse. The brain is the organ of consciousness understood as the highest form of the mental reflection of reality. The human brain is an extremely sensitive nervous apparatus consisting of a vast number of nerve cells. The total has been estimated at 15,000 million. Each of these cells is in contact with the others, and all of them together with the nerve endings of the sense organs form a highly intricate network with countless connections.

The human brain has an extremely complex "hierarchical" structure. The simplest forms of reflection, analysis and synthesis of external influences and regulation of behaviour are performed by the lower sections of the central nervous system—the spinal cord, the medulla oblongata, the middle brain and the diencephalon, while the more complex forms are controlled by the higher sections, above all, by the cerebral hemispheres. Excitations evoked by the action of external agents on the sense organs travel along the nerve fibres to various parts of the cortex of the cerebral hemispheres. The "subcortical" apparatus of the brain is the organ of extremely complex forms of activity transmitted by heredity, i.e., inborn or instinctive activity. This part of the brain performs an independent function in the lower vertebrates and tends to lose its independence in the higher vertebrates, the mammals and particularly in man.

The interaction between the organism and the environment, and also between various parts of the organism and between its organs, is effected with the aid of *reflexes*, that is, reactions of the organism evoked by irritation of the sense organs and performed with the participation of the central nervous system. Reflexes are classified in two basic groups—unconditioned and conditioned. *Unconditioned reflexes* are inborn, inherited reactions of the organism to the influence of the external environment. *Conditioned reflexes* are reactions of the organism acquired in the process of life activity; their character depends on the individual experience of the animal or human being. The theory of the reflex activity of the brain was developed by many scientists in various countries, a notable contribution being made by the Russian scientists Sechenov, Pavlov, Vvedensky, Ukhtomsky, and Orbeli. They adopted strictly materialist positions and proceeded from the idea that there is an indissoluble unity between the physiological and the mental. Research on the physiological mechanisms of consciousness and mental activity in general has benefited from the ideas advanced by the Soviet scientists Anokhin (on the integrative activity of the brain as a unitary functional system, and the physiological mechanism of the anticipatory reflection of reality) and Bernstein—on the construction of goals of action in the process of cerebral activity.

The brain is an exceptionally complex functional system. To understand its functioning correctly we must combine the data obtained from study of separate nerve cells with research into the external behaviour of the individual. No feeling, sensation or impulse can occur outside the physiological processes in the brain.

The idea that the human brain is the organ of thought arose in earliest times and is today generally accepted in science. Even in

modern times, however, some idealist philosophers contest the proposition that consciousness is a function of the brain.

Consciousness is a product of the brain's activity, and it arises only thanks to external influence reaching the brain through the sense organs. The sense organs are the "apparatuses" that reflect, and inform the organism of, changes in the external environment or within the organism itself. They may therefore be divided into external and internal organs. The external sense organs are the senses of sight, hearing, smell, taste and skin sensitivity. The signals that reach the brain from the sense organs carry information about the qualities of things, their connections and relationships. The sense organs and their corresponding nerve formations taken together were called by Pavlov "*analysers*". The analysis of the influence of the environment begins in the peripheral part of the analyser—the *receptor* (nerve endings), where some particular type of energy is singled out from all the multiplicity of types of energy influencing the organism. The highest and most subtle analysis is achieved only with the help of the cortex. Excitation of the sense organs only produces sensation, becomes a fact of consciousness, when it reaches the brain. The cortical physiological processes are the necessary material mechanisms of reflective mental activity, of the phenomena of consciousness.

2. Consciousness as the Highest Form of Mental Reflection of the Objective World

The physiological mechanisms of mental phenomena are not identical to the content of the mind (mentality, psyche) which is the reflection of reality in the form of subjective, ideal images.

Dialectical materialism is opposed to the primitive interpretation of the essence of consciousness by the advocates of *vulgar materialism* (C. Vogt, L. Büchner, J. Moleschott and others), which reduces the consciousness to its material substratum—the physiological neural processes occurring in the brain. Every natural scientist is bound to reach the conclusion, wrote Carl Vogt, that "all the abilities that are called psychical (Seelenthätigkeiten) activity are in fact only motions of the cortical substance or, to express it somewhat more bluntly, thought is in almost the same relationship to the cortex as bile is to the liver...".[1] This is the sense in which Vogt sees consciousness as something material.

[1] Carl Vogt, *Physiologische Briefe für Gebildete aller Stände*, Zweite Abteilung, J. Ricker'sche Buchhandlung, Giessen, 1874, S. 354.

It is a great mistake to identify consciousness with matter. Criticising the vulgar-materialist mistakes of Josef Dietzgen, who assumed that the "mind differs no more from the table, light, sound, than these things differ from each other", Lenin wrote: "This is obviously false. That both thought and matter are 'real', i.e., exist, is true. But to say that thought is material is to make a false step, a step towards confusing materialism and idealism."[1]

No less fallacious is the dualistic concept of *psycho-physical parallelism*, according to which psychical and material (physiological) processes are absolutely heterogeneous essences, between which there is a great gap. Some advocates of this concept have assumed that the correspondence which we observe between physiological and psychical processes is ordained by God.

Consciousness is not a special essence divorced from matter. But the image of the object created in the human brain cannot be reduced to the material object itself, which exists outside the subject, the knower. Nor can it be identified with the physiological processes that occur in the brain and generate this image. Thought, consciousness are real things. But they are not objective realities; they are something subjective, ideal.

Consciousness is the subjective image of the objective world. When we speak of the subjectivity of an image, we have in mind the fact that it is not a distorted reflection of reality, but something ideal, that is, as Karl Marx noted, something material that has been transformed and reprocessed in the brain of the individual. A thing in a person's consciousness is an image, and the real thing is its prototype. "The fundamental distinction between the materialist and the adherent of idealist philosophy," Lenin wrote, "consists in the fact that the materialist regards sensation, perception, idea, and the mind of man generally, as an image of objective reality. The world is the movement of this objective reality reflected by our consciousness. To the movement of ideas, perceptions, etc., there corresponds the movement of matter outside me."[2]

The emergence, functioning and development of consciousness is intimately linked with man's acquisition of knowledge of certain objects or phenomena. "The way in which consciousness is, " wrote Marx, "and in which something is for it, is *knowing*. Something ... comes to be for consciousness insofar as the latter *knows* this *something*."[3] Consciousness would be impossible if man did not have a cognitive relation to the objective world. At the same

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, Vol. 14, p. 244.
[2] Ibid., p. 267.
[3] K. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, Vol. 3, p. 338.

time, when we speak of consciousness, we are mainly interested in it as spiritual activity, as an ideal phenomenon that differs qualitatively from the material. Cognition is the activity of the consciousness directed towards reflection of the surrounding world.

Not all of man's mental activity is conscious. The concept of the psyche, the mental, is wider than the concept of consciousness. Animals have mentality but no consciousness. A child's mental life begins as soon as it is born, before it has yet acquired consciousness. When a person falls asleep and sees fanciful scenes, these are psychical phenomena, but they are not consciousness. And even when a person is awake not all of his mental processes are illuminated by the light of consciousness. Life demands of a person not only conscious forms of behaviour, but also unconscious ones that relieve him of the need to alert his consciousness when this is not necessary. Unconscious forms of behaviour are based on the hidden recording of information concerning the properties and relationships of things. The range of the unconscious is fairly wide, embracing sensations, perceptions and representations (images) when they proceed outside the focus of consciousness, and also instincts, skills, intuition and orientation.

The problem of the unconscious has always been the subject of acute controversy between materialism and idealism. One of the most widespread theories of the unconscious is that of the Austrian psychiatrist Sigmund Freud. Freud investigated many aspects of the unconscious, revealed its place and role in mental illness. But Freud incorrectly maintained that consciousness is determined by the unconscious, which he regarded as a highly charged complex of instinctive urges. According to Freud, the structure of the personality, its behaviour, character and also all human culture are determined ultimately by people's inborn emotions, by their instincts and drives, whose inner core is the sexual instinct.

Marxism rejects these irrationalist notions of man's mental life, which exaggerate the role of biological factors. Marxism asserts that the guiding principle in human behaviour is reason, consciousness. Unlike the animals, the normal human being is governed by conscious mental activity.

Consciousness is an integrated system of diverse but closely connected cognitive and evotional-volitional elements.

The initial sensory image, the most elementary fact of consciousness is *sensation*, by means of which the subject comes into direct contact with objective reality. Sensation is the reflection of individual properties of objects during their immediate action on the sense organs. Singling out the reflection of quality as the main factor in sensation, Lenin wrote that "the very first and most

familiar to us is sensation, and *in it* there is inevitably also *quality*...".[1] This is also expressed in speech: when we name any sensation, what we have in mind is precisely "the quality given in the sensation"—red, blue, sweet, spicy, and so on.

Lenin characterised sensations as the conversion of the energy of external irritation into a fact of consciousness. The loss of the ability to feel must inevitably entail the loss of consciousness.

Whereas sensations reflect only the separate qualities of things, the thing as a whole, in the unity of its various sensorily reproduced properties is reflected in *perception*. A person's perception usually includes apprehension of objects, their properties and relationships. For this reason the character of perception depends on the level of knowledge that a person possesses and on his interests.

The process of sensory reflection is not confined to sensation and perception. A higher form of sensory reflection is *representation*. This is imaginal knowledge of objects that we have perceived in the past but that are not acting on our senses at the given moment. Representations, or images, arise as a result of the perception of external influences and their subsequent retention in the memory.

The images with which man's consciousness operates are not restricted to the reproduction of what is sensorily perceived. A person may creatively combine and with relative freedom create new images in his consciousness. The highest form of representation is productive, creative *imagination*.

Owing to its relative freedom from the immediate influence of the object and its generalisation of the total evidence of the senses into a single conceivable image, representation is an important stage in the process of reflection, which moves from sensation to thinking. Dialectical materialism acknowledges the qualitative difference between representation and thought but does not divorce them from each other. Characterising the dialectics of the interrelationship between representation and thought, Lenin wrote: "Is sensuous representation *closer* to reality than thought? Both yes and no. Sensuous representation cannot apprehend movement *as a whole*, it cannot, for example, apprehend movement at a speed of 300,000 km per second, but *thought* does and must apprehend it."[2]

Theoretical thinking, which takes the form of *concepts, propositions and inferences*, is a reflection of the essential, law-governed relationships of things. Some aspects of the world that are inaccessible to sense perception are open to thought. On the basis of the

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Plan of Hegel's Dialectics (Logic)*, Vol. 38, p. 319.
[2] V. I. Lenin, *Conspectus of Hegel's Book "The Science of Logic"*, Ibid., p. 228.

visible, tangible, audible, and so on, we are able, thanks to our ability to think, to penetrate into the invisible, intangible and inaudible. By means of thought we make the dialectical transition from the external to the internal, from phenomena to the essence of things, processes, and so on. While it is the highest form of reflective activity, thinking is also present at the sensory stage; as soon as a person senses or perceives something he begins to think, to apprehend the results of sensory perceptions.

Consciousness is not only the process of cognition and its result—knowledge; it is also the *emotional experience* of what is cognised, a certain *evaluation* of things, qualities and their relationships. Without emotional experiences which help to mobilise or inhibit our energies, it is impossible to have certain relationships to the world. "...There has never been, nor can there be, any human *search* for truth without 'human emotions'."[1]

The "mainspring" of people's behaviour and consciousness is *need*—man's dependence on the external world, the individual's subjective demands on the objective world, his need for such objects and conditions as are essential to his normal life activity, his self-assertion and development.

Yet another important aspect of consciousness is *self-consciousness*. Life demands of a person that he should know not only the external world but also himself. In reflecting objective reality man becomes aware not only of this process but also of himself as a feeling and thinking being, aware of his ideals, interests, and moral make-up. He singles himself out from the surrounding world and is aware of his attitude to that world, of what he feels, thinks and does. A person's becoming aware of himself as an individual is, in fact, self-consciousness. Self-consciousness forms under the influence of social life, which demands of a person control over his behaviour and responsibility for his actions.

Consciousness exists not only within the individual. It becomes objectivised and enjoys a supra-personal existence—in the discoveries of science, in the creations of art, in legal and moral standards and so on. All these manifestations of the social consciousness are a necessary condition for the formation of the personal, individual consciousness. The consciousness of each individual person absorbs knowledge, beliefs, faiths and evaluations of the social environment in which he lives.

Man is a social being. Historically formed rules of thinking, standards of law and morality, aesthetic tastes and so on mould a

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Book Review, "N.A. Rubakin, Among Books"*, Vol. 20, p. 260.

person's behaviour and thinking, make him a representative of a certain way of life, level of culture and psychology. "If man is social by nature, he will develop his true nature only in society, and the power of his nature must be measured not by the power of the separate individual but by the power of society."[1] Mental abilities and qualities are formed in the process of a person's life in society and are determined by specific social conditions.

A person becomes a conscious being, rises to the level of personality, to the heights of contemporary thought only in the course of social development.

A basic principle of the dialectical-materialist interpretation of consciousness is acknowledgement of the inseparable connection between consciousness and activity, practice.

Consciousness and the objective world are opposites that form a unity. The basis of this unity is *practice, people's sensuously objective activities*, which are expressed in labour, the class struggle, scientific experiment and so on. It is these activities that make it necessary to reflect reality in human consciousness. The need for consciousness that gives a true reflection of the world lies, consequently, in the conditions and needs of social life itself.

Although consciousness is a function of the brain, it is not the brain but the person, acting as the subject of transforming activity, as a maker of history, that is aware of reality. Consequently, the essence of human consciousness cannot be revealed by proceeding only from the anatomical, physiological properties of the brain. The emergence, functioning and development of consciousness is possible only in society, on the basis of people's practical activity.

In influencing us the objective world is reflected in the consciousness and becomes ideal. In its turn, consciousness, the ideal, is transformed by means of practical activity into reality, into the real.

Consciousness is characterised by an active creative attitude to the external world, to oneself, to human activity. The activeness of consciousness can be seen in the fact that a person reflects the external world purposefully, selectively. He reproduces in his head objects and phenomena through the prism of the knowledge he has already acquired—his representations and concepts. Reality is recreated in human consciousness not in the dead form of a mirror-like reflection, but in a creatively transformed state. Consciousness is capable of creating images that anticipate reality. It has the ability to foresee.

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *The Holy Family, or Critique of Critical Criticism*, Vol. 4, p. 131.

Man's brain is built in such a way as not only to receive, preserve and produce information, but also to draw up a plan of action and put it into effect through active direction. Human action is always designed to achieve an ultimate result, that is, a certain aim. Any significant action on the part of the individual represents the solution to some important problem, the realisation of some intention. The succeeding stages of the process of action and activity as a whole are more or less clearly coordinated inasmuch as the whole process is predetermined by its goal, its plan. Speaking of the distinction between human labour activity and the behaviour of the animals, Marx stressed that man not only changes the form of what is given in nature; in what is given by nature he also realises his own conscious goal, which as a law determines the means and character of his actions and to which he must subordinate his will. The aim which a person strives to achieve is that which must be created, that which does not yet exist in reality. It is the ideal model of the desired future. A human action has as its precondition two closely connected processes: one of them is the setting of the goal, that is, the envisaging, the anticipation of the future, which proceeds from cognition of the relevant connections and relationships of things, and the other is the programming, the planning of action that should lead to realisation of the goal.

The setting of goals, that is, the foreseeing of the purpose for which a person carries out certain actions, is an essential condition of any conscious act. However, as Hegel observed, "the essence of the matter is not accounted for by its *aim*, but by its *realisation*...".[1] The realisation of the aim presupposes the application of *means*, that is, of what is created and exists for the sake of the aim.

Man creates things which nature did not produce before him. The design, scale, form and properties of the things that man has transformed and created are dictated by human needs and goals; they embody human ideas and plans. The fundamental vital meaning and historical necessity of the emergence and development of consciousness lie precisely in the creative and regulative activity designed to transform the world and make it serve the interests of man and society. This active transforming role of consciousness was what Lenin had in mind when he said: "Man's consciousness not only reflects the objective world, but creates it.... The world does not satisfy man and man decides to change it by his activity."[2]

[1] G. W. F. Hegel, *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, Akad. Verlag, Berlin, 1964, S. 11.

[2] V. I. Lenin, *Conspectus of Hegel's Book "The Science of Logic"*, Vol. 38, pp. 212, 213.

3. Evolution of Forms of Reflection

The ability of the human brain to reflect reality is a result of the prolonged development of highly organised matter.

Some philosophical and psychological conceptions erroneously assert that the problem of the emergence of consciousness from its biological preconditions is removed by the fact that only man is recognised as possessing mental faculties. This idea goes back to Descartes, who assumed that animals are merely complex machines. Exactly the opposite position is held by those who believe that not only animals but all nature is animate (Jean-François-Eugène Robinet and others). Between these two extreme conceptions there is an intermediate position of "biopsychism", according to which intelligence, mental activity, is a property only of living matter (Ernst Haeckel and others).

Dialectical materialism rejects both the idea of the universal animism of matter and the idea that intelligence is inherent only in man. Nor does it share the position of "biopsychism". Dialectical materialism proceeds from the fact that the *mental reflection of the external* world is a property of matter that appears at a high level of development of living beings when a nervous system is formed.

When considering the sources of consciousness, Lenin advanced the idea that in its clearly expressed form sensation is associated only with the higher forms of matter, whereas the very edifice of matter is founded upon an ability resembling sensation—the quality of *reflection*.

Reflection as a general property of matter is conditioned by the fact that objects and phenomena are in universal interconnection and interaction. In acting upon one another they produce certain changes. These changes take the form of "traces", which register the peculiarities of the acting object or phenomenon. The forms of reflection depend on the specific nature and level of structural organisation of the interacting bodies. The content of reflection, on the other hand, is expressed in what changes take place in the reflecting object and what aspects of the acting object or phenomenon they reproduce.

The correlation between the results of reflection ("traces") and the reflected (acting) object may be expressed in the form of isomorphism and homeomorphism. *Isomorphism* means a similarity between certain objects, the kind of resemblance in their form and structure that we find, for example, in a photograph. An isomorphous reflection is a close reproduction of the original. *Homeomorphism* is only an approximate reflection, for example, the reflection of a locality on a map.

Reflection is inherent in matter at all stages of its organisation, but the highest forms of reflection are connected with living matter, with life. What is life? Life is a specific, complex form of the motion of matter. Its important attributes are irritability, growth, and procreation. These are based on the exchange of substances, on metabolism. Metabolism is the essence of life. It involves a certain material substratum (in the conditions of the earth, proteins and nucleic acids).

Life is primarily a process of interaction between the organism and its environment. On our planet it takes the form of countless different organisms, from the simplest to the most complex, such as man. In the process of biological evolution the increasing complexity of the structures and patterns of behaviour of organisms is accompanied by a similar sophistication of the forms of reflection. Reflection and the forms which it assumes in various organisms directly depend on the character and level of their behaviour, their activity. As their activity becomes more complex, living organisms acquire sense organs and develop a nervous system. At the same time their very activity depends on the regulative influence of reflection.

The initial, elementary form of reflection inherent in all living organisms is *irritability*. This is expressed in the selective reaction of living bodies to external influences (light, changes of temperature, and so on). At a higher level of evolution of living organisms irritability passes into a qualitatively new property—*sensitivity*, that is, the ability to reflect the individual proportions of things in the form of sensations.

Reflection achieves a higher level in vertebrates, which acquire the ability to analyse complexes of simultaneously acting irritants and to reflect them in the form of perception—an integrated picture of the situation. Sensations and perceptions, as was said earlier, are images of things. This implies the appearance of elementary forms of mental activity, mentality as a function of the nervous system and a form of reflection of reality.[1]

Usually a distinction is made between two closely connected types of behaviour in animals: instinctive, inborn behaviour, which can be inherited, and individually acquired behaviour. Animals possess the ability to reflect the biologically significant properties of objects of the environment (that is to say, properties that help them to satisfy their needs for food, to avoid danger, and so on).

The perfecting of this ability leads to the formation of various complex forms of behaviour. In the higher animals, such as the

[1] For more on the role of reflection in the process of cognition see Section 4, Chapter VII.

apes, they are expressed in the ability to discover circuitous routes to a goal, in the use of various objects as tools, and so on. In short, what we call in everyday terms animal "intelligence".

The high level of development of mental activity in animals shows that man's consciousness has its biological preconditions and that there is no unbridgeable gap between man and his animal ancestors; in fact, there is a certain continuity. This does not mean, however, that their mental activity is of precisely the same quality.

4. Consciousness and Speech. Their Origins and Interconnection

Consciousness and speech originated with the transition of our ape-like ancestors from the appropriation of ready-made objects with the help of their natural organs, to labour, to the making of artificial tools, to human forms of life activity and the social relationships that grow up on its basis. The transition to consciousness and speech represents a great qualitative leap in the development of the psyche, of mental activity.

The animals' mental activity helps them to orientate themselves in a changing environment and adapt themselves to it, but they cannot deliberately and systematically transform the world that surrounds them. Labour, understood as a goal-oriented activity, is the basic condition of all human life and the formation of consciousness. Labour, Engels says, "...is the prime basic condition for all human existence, and this to such an extent that, in a sense, we have to say that labour created man himself".[1] The initial form of labour is the process of making tools out of wood, stone, bone, and so on, and producing the means of existence with their help. Some animals also have the ability to use various objects as tools. For example, apes sometimes pick up a stone to break nuts with, or they may use a stick to catch a bait, and so on. But not a single ape has ever made itself even the most primitive tool.

About a million years ago our ape-like ancestors lived in the trees. Changing conditions brought them down from the trees on to the ground. In this new situation they had to make systematic use of sticks, stones, and the bones of large animals as means of defence from beasts of prey, and also for the purpose of attacking other animals. The need for the systematic use of tools compelled them gradually to pass on to the processing of materials that they found

[1] F. Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1979, p. 170.

in nature, to the production of the tools themselves. All this led to a substantial change in the functions of the forelimbs, which adapted themselves to more and more new operations and became the natural instruments of labour.

As it developed in the process of labour activity the hand brought improvements to the whole organism including the brain. Consciousness could arise only as a function of a sophisticated brain, formed under the influence of labour and speech. "First labour, after it and then with it speech—these were the two most essential stimuli under the influence of which the brain of the ape gradually changed into that of man".[1]

Labour activity and the development of the brain also improved man's sense organs. His sense of touch became more and more accurate and subtle, his hearing acquired the ability to distinguish the finest shades and similarities of sounds in human speech, his vision grew ever more perceptive. The eagle, wrote Engels, sees much further than man, but the human eye sees considerably more in things than does the eye of the eagle.

The logic of practical action was registered in the brain and there turned into the logic of thought, giving rise to the ability to set goals.

At first man's awareness of his actions and surroundings was limited to sensuous images, their combination and primitive generalisation. Consciousness was at first only an awareness of the immediately perceived environment, the immediate connections with other people. As the forms of labour and social relationships became more complex, however, man acquired the ability to think in the form of concepts, propositions and inferences that reflected the ever more profound and diversified connections between the objects and phenomena of reality.

The origin of consciousness is directly connected with the birth of *language, of articulate speech,* which expresses people's images and thoughts in material form. Like consciousness speech could take shape only in the process of labour, which demanded the coordinated actions of several people working together, and which they could not perform without close contacts and constant intercommunication.

Speech was preceded by a long period of the development of the sound and motor reactions in animals. But animals have no need for speech communication. "The little that even the most highly-developed animals need to communicate to each other does not require articulate speech."[2]

[1] Ibid., p. 174.
[2] Ibid., p. 173.

The activity of speech is performed with the aid of *language*, that is, a definite system of means of communication. There are various forms of speech: oral, written and internal (soundless, invisible speech, which is the material form of consciousness when man is thinking of something "to himself").

The basic units of speech are *words* and *sentences*. Words are a unity of meaning and sound. The material aspect of the word (sound, written symbol) denotes an object and is a *sign*. The meaning of the word, on the other hand, reflects the object and is a sensuous or mental *image*. The sentence is the material form, the vehicle of a complete thought or proposition.

It is language that helps us to make the transition from living contemplation, from sense perception to generalised, abstract thinking. "Every word (speech) already *universalises*...."[1] By objectivising our thoughts and feelings on speech, presenting them to ourselves, as it were, we are able to analyse them as objects outside ourselves.

Philosophers have for long been deeply interested in the problem of consciousness and speech, which has evoked much controversy. Some thinkers treated speech and thought as exactly the same thing, maintaining that reason is language. Others divorced consciousness from speech and believed that thinking could be performed without language, that language was a product of thought.

Marxism treats consciousness as being in close connection with language and speech. Revealing the relationship between language, consciousness and reality, Marx and Engels observed that "...neither thoughts nor language in themselves form a realm of their own ... they are only *manifestations* of actual life".[2] And again: "*Language* is the immediate actuality of thought."[3] Just as language does not exist without thought, so thoughts and ideas cannot exist apart from language. The separation of thought from language, on the one hand, inevitably makes a mystery of consciousness by depriving it of the material means of its formation and realisation and, on the other, leads to the interpretation of language, of speech as a self-contained essence, divorced from the life of society and the development of culture.

Consciousness and speech form a unity, but it is an internally contradictory unity of diverse phenomena. Consciousness *reflects* reality while language *denotes* it and *expresses* thoughts. When clothed in the forms of speech, thoughts and ideas do not lose their unique qualities.

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Conspectus of Hegel's Book "Lectures on the History of Philosophy"*, Vol. 38, p. 274.
[2] K. Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology*, Vol. 5, p. 447.
[3] Ibid., p. 446.

In speech our representations, thoughts and feelings are clothed in a material, sensually perceptible form and thus pass from our own personal possession into the possession of other people, of society. This makes speech an effective instrument with which some people can influence others, with which society can influence the individual.

Whereas in animals the experience of the species is passed on by the mechanism of heredity, which makes their progress extremely slow, in people experience and the various methods of influencing the environment are largely passed on through the instruments of labour and through speech. In addition to the biological factor—heredity—man has evolved a more powerful and also direct means of passing on experience—the social means, thus tremendously accelerating the rate of progress of both material and intellectual culture.

It is thanks to speech that consciousness takes shape and develops as a social phenomenon, as the intellectual product of social life. As a means of human intercourse, of the exchange of experience, knowledge, feelings and ideas, speech links not only the members of a given social group or generation, but also different generations. Hence the continuity of historical epochs.

Idealist philosophers maintain that consciousness develops out of its own internal sources and can be understood only in its own terms. Dialectical materialism, on the other hand, proceeds from the fact that consciousness cannot be regarded in isolation from the other phenomena of social life. Consciousness is not isolated, it develops and changes in the process of the historical development of society. Although consciousness has its origins in the biological forms of mental activity, it is not a product of nature, but a socio-historical phenomenon. It is not the brain as such that determines what sensations, thoughts and feelings a person may have. The brain becomes an organ of consciousness only when a person is drawn into the maelstrom of social life, when he acts in conditions that feed his brain with the juices of a historically evolved and developing culture, compel him to function in a direction set by the demands of social life, and orient him towards posing and solving problems necessary to man and society.

5. Consciousness and Cybernetics

A substantial contribution to our knowledge of the nature of reflection and consciousness has been made by cybernetics, the science of intricate self-regulating dynamic systems. Such systems

include living organisms, organs, cells, biological communities, society and certain technical devices, all of which have the ability to receive information, to process and memorise it, to act on the feed-back principle and to regulate themselves on this basis.

What is *information*? What relation does it bear to reflection? There is no consensus on this question. Some scientists are inclined to treat information and reflection as the same thing, while others assume that these concepts are closely related but not identical.

In the process of reflection there is bound to be some transmission of information, that is to say, a transmission from one object to another of a certain pattern (structure, form), on the basis of which one may assess certain attributes, or properties of the acting object.

Specific information processes occur at every level of the organisation of matter. Exchange of information takes place even in inanimate nature, but there it is never deciphered. The ability not only to receive but also to make active use of information is a fundamental property of animate matter. The adaptive functions in animals, their *behaviour*, and the *control* that goes with it, would be unthinkable without information. In cybernetics control is the programmed regulation of the actions of one system (controlled) by another (controlling). Thus the brain is a controlling system, while the organs of movement form a controlled system.

Information is passed on by means of certain *signals*, that is, any material processes (electrical impulses, electromagnetic modulations, smells, sounds, colours, and so on). A signal can convey information because it possesses a certain structure. Information is the content of the signal.

Information signalling is the principle on which all computers are based. The appearance of the computer with its ability to process vast quantities of information for man has highlighted the problem of whether it is possible to model thought with the help of machines, the problem of the similarities and differences between the processes occurring in modelling machines and in the human brain. For instance, there are machines that can "identify" visual images. Admittedly they can "identify" only the limited class of objects that has been fed into them in the processes of their "teaching" or "self-teaching". The fundamental difference between human perception and the "identifying" function of the machine is that in the first case the result is a subjective image of the object, and in the second it is a code of various features of the object that the machine needs for performing certain tasks.

The most practical results so far achieved have been in the modelling of memory. Machines have been built that can memorise

information at very high speeds, store it in their "memory" for any length of time and faultlessly reproduce it. The "memory" of such machines is capacious, but machine "memory" differs essentially from human memory. In the human brain the memory is organised on the basis of a conceptual system of reference that enables it to select the information it needs without going through every item in succession. The conceptual organisation of knowledge and not the speed of the physiological processes involved is what gives the human memory its rapidity of recall. A person memorises information not by storing it mechanically but through a comprehended, goaloriented process.

The modelling of certain aspects of thought activity is no less impressive in its results than the modelling of perception and memory. At present there are machines that can perform such intellectual operations as proving geometrical theorems, translation from one language to another, or playing chess.

Cybernetic machines are extremely effective for modelling the characteristically human ability of formal logical thought. But human consciousness is by no means confined to such thought. It has a dialectical flexibility and accuracy in solving problems that is not conditioned by any rigid system of formal rules.

We must remember that man's ability to think is shaped by his assimilation of a historically accumulated culture, by his education and training, and by his performance of certain activities with the aid of means and devices created by society. The richness of a man's inner world depends on the richness and diversity of his social connections. Therefore, if we wished to model the whole human consciousness, its structure and all its functions, it would not be enough to reproduce only the *structure* of the brain. We should have to reproduce the logic of the whole history of human thought, and consequently repeat the whole historical path of human development and provide it with all its needs, including political, moral, aesthetic and other needs.

Man has evolved as a conscious being in the course of social development, and so the problem of man and his consciousness is not so much a problem of natural science, and certainly not just a problem of cybernetics, but a philosophical and sociological problem.

Thus, examination of the question of consciousness, its specific features and origins, its connection with the brain and speech, confirms the correctness of the Marxist-Leninist proposition that consciousness is essentially reflective and socio-historical in character.

Chapter V

THE UNIVERSAL DIALECTICAL LAWS OF DEVELOPMENT

Dialectics, the most complete, comprehensive and profound theory of development, is the heart and soul of Marxism-Leninism, its theoretical foundation. The universal laws of dialectics reveal the essential features of any developing phenomenon, no matter to what field of activity it may belong.

1. Materialist Dialectics as the Science of the Universal Connection and Development

The modern scientific world outlook is firmly based on the principle of motion, change and development as the universal fundamental principle of all being and knowledge. This principle has had to assert itself throughout the history of human thought in opposition to various metaphysical concepts.

Philosophy played a tremendous part in asserting the concept of development and in evolving its scientific theory. Long before the specific sciences of nature and society were able to approach their subjects from the positions of development, philosophy put forward the proposition that development was the essential principle of being. Many of the Greek philosophers, for instance, regarded the whole world and every separate object in it as the result of a process of formation. Admittedly, their dialectics was naive. But the very posing of the question of development as a general law of all that exists left a deep imprint on the history of knowledge. Subsequently, basing itself on specialised fields of knowledge, philosophy went on to evolve ever more profound conceptions of the essence of development. But this was a complex and far from straightforward path. For many centuries the dominant world outlook was metaphysics, understood as a doctrine of the immutable and everlasting nature of things and their properties. It was only from the end of the 18th century that science and philosophy were once again infused with the ideas of development and change, but these ideas were now based on a profound study of nature.

Materialist dialectics was born of the generalisation of scientific achievements and also of mankind's historical experience, which

showed that social life and human consciousness, like nature itself, are in a state of constant change and development. Accordingly dialectics is defined in Marxist-Leninist philosophy as the science "of the general laws of motion and development of nature, human society and thought",[1] as "...the doctrine of development in its fullest, deepest and most comprehensive form, the doctrine of the relativity of the human knowledge that provides us with a reflection of eternally developing matter".[2]

The concept of development cannot be understood without the concepts of the connection and interdependence, the interaction of phenomena. No motion would be possible without this connection and interaction between different objects, or between the various aspects and elements within each object. This is why Engels calls dialectics also "the science of universal inter-connection".[3] Lenin, in his article "Karl Marx", characterised the most essential features of dialectics, particularly emphasising "the interdependence and the closest and indissoluble connection between *all* aspects of any phenomenon (history constantly revealing ever new aspects), a connection that provides a uniform, and universal process of motion, one that follows definite laws...".[4]

To understand any phenomenon correctly we must examine it in its connection with other phenomena, know its origins and further development.

The connection between objects may be of various kinds: some phenomena are directly connected with each other, while in others the connection proceeds through intermediate links, but this connection is always interdependence, interaction.

Every system in the world is formed through interaction between its constituent elements. In exactly the same way all bodies acquire their properties on the basis of interaction and motion and manifest these properties through them. Interaction is universal, comprising every possible change in the properties and states of objects and all types of connection between them.

The world knows no absolutely isolated phenomena; all are conditioned by some other phenomena. Of course, in the process of gaining knowledge we may isolate an object from its general connections for a time in order to study it. But sooner or later the logic of research demands that we restore this connection; otherwise it is impossible to arrive at a true notion of what the object is.

[1] F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p. 172.
[2] V. I. Lenin, *The Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism*, Vol. 19, p. 24.
[3] F. Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, p. 17.
[4] V. I. Lenin, *Karl Marx*, Vol. 21, p. 54.

Every phenomenon and the world as a whole are a complex system of relationships, in which the connection and interaction of cause and effect play an essential part. Thanks to this connection certain phenomena and processes engender others, certain forms of motion pass into others in the whole process of perpetual motion and development. The world emerges not as a chaotic and accidental conglomeration of objects, events and processes, but as a natural whole governed by objective laws existing independently of human consciousness and will.

The general, universal connection and interaction of phenomena and processes must find its reflection in the interconnection of human concepts. Only in this case can man know the world in its unity and motion. The scientific concept or system of concepts formed by man in the process of cognition is nothing but a reflection of the internal connection of phenomena and processes.

Science has always in some way or another attempted to reveal the connections between phenomena. But science has never been so concerned with studying individual phenomena as parts of a single whole as it is today. The analysis of phenomena and processes as systems, i.e., as entities, the elements and parts of which are in a definite connection and interdependence and which are themselves aspects and parts of larger systems, is a characteristic feature of modern science.

The goal of science is, first of all, to understand nature and society as a law-governed process of motion and development, a process that is conditioned and guided by objective laws. But what is a law? *A law is an intrinsic connection and interdependence between phenomena.* Not every connection between phenomena and processes is a law. For a connection between phenomena to be regarded as a law it must be *essential, stable, repetitive and intrinsically inherent in those phenomena.*

A connection may also be external, inessential and due to coincidence of circumstances. Such connections leave a mark on development but do not determine it. A law is an *expression of necessity*, that is, a connection that determines the character of development in certain conditions. Such, for example, is the connection between the economic system of society and other social phenomena (state, forms of social consciousness, and so on). A change in the economic system must necessarily evoke law-governed changes in other aspects of social life.

A law is a *form of universality*. Knowledge of laws allows us to conceive of the vast and varied world in its unity and wholeness. "...The concept of *law* is *one* of the stages of the cognition by man of *unity* and *connection*, of the reciprocal dependence and totality

of the world process."[1]

With a knowledge of the laws of nature and society people are able to act consciously, to foresee certain events, to transform the objects of nature and their properties to their advantage and purposefully change the social conditions of their life. "Once the interconnection is grasped, all theoretical belief in the permanent necessity of existing conditions collapses before their collapse in practice."[2]

It is no accident therefore that the dialectical theory that nature and society develop according to certain laws is attacked by the opponents of reliable scientific knowledge and also by people who have a stake in perpetuating an obsolete social order.

The idealist philosophers try to deny the objective character of laws and treat them as inventions of the human mind. The subjective idealist Karl Pearson wrote, for instance, "Law in the scientific sense is thus essentially a product of the human mind and has no meaning apart from man. It owes its existence to the creative power of his intellect. There is more meaning in the statement that man gives laws to Nature than in its converse that Nature gives laws to man."[3] But if laws were ascribed to reality by man himself, science would be powerless to predict future phenomena and man would have no known objective laws to guide him in making the machines that help him to master and transform the external world. Materialist dialectics does not go in for inventing connections and laws. It sets science the task of discovering them in the objective world itself.

Let us consider the basic types of objective laws. They can be divided into three main groups: (1) *particular* laws expressing the relationships between the specific properties of objects or between processes within the framework of one or another form of motion; (2) *general* laws applying to large groups of objects and phenomena; and (3) *universal* laws. The first kind of laws is manifested in specific conditions and has an extremely limited sphere of application. The laws in the second group express the connection between comparatively common properties of a large number of qualitatively different material objects, and between recurrent phenomena. Here, for example, we find the laws of the conservation of mass, energy, charge, and quantity of movement in physics, and the law

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Conspectus of Hegel's Book "The Science of Logic"*, Vol. 38, pp. 150-51.

[2] K. Marx to L. Kügelmann in Hanover. London, July 11, 1868, in: K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1969, p. 419.

[3] Karl Pearson, *The Grammar of Science*, The Meridian Library, Meridian Books, Inc., New York, 1960, p. 87.

of natural selection in biology. The laws in the third group express the universal dialectical relations between all existing phenomena and their properties, and the tendencies of matter to change. Besides its qualitative diversity matter has a certain internal unity which shows itself in the universal connection and interdependence of all phenomena, in the historical development and conversion of some forms of matter into others. This unity is expressed in universal laws.

As a philosophical science, dialectics is concerned with universal laws.

The laws of dialectics operate everywhere, embracing all aspects of reality. They are *laws of nature, society and thought.* They therefore have a universal cognitive and methodological significance, which means that dialectics is a method applicable not only to one field of knowledge, but is *the universal method of man's cognitive activity.* It should be borne in mind that dialectics is not a "universal key" that will unlock the secrets of any scientific riddle. Dialectics is important because it shows us the correct approach to reality, but this approach can be made only through concrete study of phenomena.

The universal laws of development are evolved by dialectics as *laws of existence* and *laws of knowledge.* In their essence they form a unity, and without such unity there can be no true knowledge or thought. Dialectics is therefore not only a doctrine concerning the laws of the development of being; it is also a theory of knowledge, logic, that is, a doctrine concerning the forms and laws of thinking. While possessing objective content, the laws of dialectics are at the same time steps in cognition, logical forms of the reflection of reality. Now let us consider more specifically the basic laws of dialectics.

2. The Law of the Transformation of Quantitative into Qualitative Changes and Vice Versa

Dialectics is not just a matter of asserting that everything develops. What we have to do is to understand the mechanism of this development scientifically. In the present age of astonishing scientific advance and great social transformations no one ventures to deny the principle of development. On the contrary, everyone "agrees" with it. But, as Lenin observed, this "agreement" is sometimes of a kind that makes for distortion of the truth.

There exist various views on and approaches to the principle of

development. From the vast array Lenin singled out the two most essential conceptions, of which one expresses the scientific, dialectical theory, and the other the unscientific, anti-dialectical theory. This proposition of Lenin's on the two opposite conceptions of development is very important because it sets criteria by which we can identify the truly scientific, dialectical doctrine of development. Lenin writes: "The two basic ... conceptions of development (evolution) are: development as decrease and increase, as repetition, *and* development as a unity of opposites (the division of a unity into mutually exclusive opposites and their reciprocal relation).

"In the first conception of motion, *self*-movement, its *driving* force, its source, its motive, remains in the shade (or this source is made *external*—God, subject, etc.). In the second conception the chief attention is directed precisely to knowledge of the *source* of *'self'*-movement.

"The first conception is lifeless, pale and dry. The second is living. The second *alone* furnishes the key to the 'leaps', to the 'break in continuity', to the 'transformation into the opposite', to the destruction of the old and the emergence of the new."[1]

The distinguishing feature of the dialectical conception of development lies in the understanding of development not as a simple quantitative change (increase or decrease) of what exists, but as a process of disappearance, destruction of the old and emergence of the new. This process is demonstrated in the law of the transformation of quantitative changes into qualitative changes and vice versa. To find out what this law is all about we must examine a number of categories such as property, quantity, quality and measure.

Getting to know an object begins with the external, direct impressions we have when we see it in the process of interaction with other objects. Nothing can be known about it without such interaction. And it is this interaction that reveals the *properties* of things which, once known, provide the clue to the things themselves. Metal, for instance, has such properties as density, compressibility, heat and electrical conductivity, and so on. One might conclude from this that a thing is nothing more than the sum total of certain properties, so that to know a thing we merely have to establish what those properties are. But this conclusion would be premature. No matter how important the properties of a thing, when it comes to describing it, the thing cannot be reduced to its properties. For instance, a number of the properties of capitalism change in the course of its development: the old capitalism without monopolies

[1] V. I. Lenin, *On the Question of Dialectics,* Vol. 38, p. 360.

becomes monopolistic, but this does not mean that capitalism ceases to be capitalism.

Consequently the properties of an object are a manifestation of something more essential which characterises the object itself. This more essential something is the object's *quality*. Quality is what defines an object as one thing and not another. It is what accounts for the amazing diversity of the real world. "*Quality*," Hegel says in his explanation of this category, "is, above all, a direct determinacy identical with being.... A thing is what it is thanks to its quality and, in losing its quality, it ceases to be what it is."[1] Quality is something more than the mere totality of even essential properties, because it expresses the unity, the integrity of a thing, its relative stability, its identity with itself.

Quality is closely connected with the *structure* of an object, that is to say, with a certain form of organisation of the elements and properties of which it is composed, thanks to which it is not merely the sum total of the latter but their unity and wholeness. The concept of structure tells us why the change or even the loss of some or other of a thing's properties does not directly change its quality. If we continue our example of capitalism we see that the structure of the capitalist mode of production embodies the interconnection of all the aspects, elements and properties implied in its private-property nature, in the relationship between capital and labour. This is what determines its quality, and until the structure of the connection between the means of production and the producers changes, capitalism will not cease to be what it is. It is this kind of change in bourgeois society that is ignored by its contemporary apologists, who try to identify changes in certain properties of capitalism with its fundamental qualitative change.

In the very definition of quality we are at once confronted with the dialectics of the object, the thing. Whenever we define the quality of a thing, we relate it to something else and consequently set limits to its existence. Beyond these limits it is not what it was, but something else. This means that the quality of a thing is identical with its finiteness.

If we state that objects have the same quality, it means they are the same. They may, of course, possess different properties, but qualitatively they are identical. Since they are identical in quality, they differ from one another only in quantity. There may be more or less of them, they may differ from one another in volume, size and so on. In other words, the qualitative identity of objects is the

[1] G. W. F. Hegel, *Werke*, Bd. 6, Duncker und Humblot, Berlin, 1840, S. 179.

precondition for understanding their other aspect—the *quantitative* aspect. Hegel says that quantity is "sublated quality", that is, the analysis of things as qualities inevitably leads us to the category of quantity. This is quite natural because quality and quantity cannot exist separately and a thing is both one and the other at the same time. We separate them artificially only for the sake of knowledge but, having done so, we restore the connection.

The category of *quantity* demands abstraction from the qualitative diversity of things. According to the general law of knowledge we must first investigate the qualitative differences between things, and then their quantitative regularities. The latter allow us to obtain a deeper knowledge of the essence of things. For example, science was for long unable to understand the cause of the qualitative difference of colours—red, green, violet and so on. The explanation was found only when it was established that difference of colour depends on the quantitatively different length of electromagnetic waves.

In *Capital* Karl Marx begins his study of capitalist society with a definition of the quality of commodities—the "cell" of the bourgeois mode of production. He establishes that commodities differ as use values, that is, by the fact that they satisfy different needs of the consumer. Marx shows that the labour which produces qualitatively different commodities also has special characteristic qualities; it is the concrete labour of the carpenter, the confectioner, the bootmaker, and so on. But if these are only differences in commodity-producing labour, how can we effect an exchange of, say, boots and tables? Marx establishes that commodities are the product not only of concrete labour, but of the "abstract labour" characteristic of commodity production, labour as the expenditure of human energy, manual and mental. It is this qualitatively identical labour that allows us to compare the most diverse commodities and to exchange them. Such labour can be distinguished in terms of quantity; consequently, various goods can be exchanged in various proportions. It was this that allowed Marx to proceed from the qualitative analysis of commodities and the labour producing them to the quantitative analysis of the laws of commodity exchange.

From what has been said it is clear that *quantity is an expression of the similarity, the identity of things*, thanks to which they can be increased or decreased, added up or divided, and so on. Quantity is therefore embodied in size, in number, in the degree and intensity of development of certain aspects of an object, in the rate of flow of certain processes, in the space-time properties of phenomena. The more complex phenomena become the more complex are their quantitative parameters, and the more difficult they are to

analyse in terms of quantity.

The essential difference between quantity and quality is that one can change certain quantitative properties of an object without its undergoing any significant changes. For instance, one may raise the temperature of a metal by tens or even hundreds of degrees without making it melt, that is, without changing its aggregate state. This means that the quantity of a thing is not so closely connected with its state as its quality. In the analysis of quantitative relationships one can within certain limits ignore the quality of objects. The wide application of quantitative, mathematical methods in many sciences investigating qualitatively different objects is based on this peculiarity of quantity.

Changes of quantity, however, are in external relationships to a thing only within certain limits for each particular thing. Sometimes even the smallest departure beyond these limits leads to a fundamental qualitative change in the thing. Any changes in quantity, of course, have their effect on the state of a thing, its properties. But only quantitative changes that have reached a certain level are connected with fundamental changes of quality.

The dependence of quality on quantity may be traced in the qualitative diversity of atoms, for example. Every kind of atom is defined by the number of protons in its nucleus, in other words by its atomic number in the periodic system of elements. One proton more or one proton less and we have a qualitatively different kind of atom.

Thus, the quality of things is inseparably linked with a certain quantity. This connection and interdependence of quality and quantity is called the *proportion* of a thing. The category of proportion expresses the kind of relationship between the quality and quantity of an object that obtains when its quality is based on a definite quantity, and the latter is the quantity of a definite quality. It is the changes in such interrelationships, changes of proportion, that explain the mechanism of development. Hence development should be understood not as motion within certain fixed and immutable limits, but as replacement of the old by the new, as an eternal and ceaseless process of renewal of what exists. At a certain stage quantitative changes reach a level when the former harmony of quality and quantity becomes disharmony. At this point the old qualitative state must yield to the new.

The transformation of quantitative into qualitative changes goes hand in hand with the reverse process: new quality gives rise to new changes of quantity. Thus the socialist mode of production develops the productive forces and other aspects of society at faster rates, in quantitatively greater proportions, and so on, as compared with

capitalism. For example, the average rate of growth of national income in the socialist countries of the CMEA over the 30 years of its existence has been three times higher and industrial output four times higher than the average for the capitalist world.

Quantitative changes occur *constantly* and *gradually*. Qualitative change takes place in the form of a *break* in this gradualness. This means that development, since it is the unity of quantitative and qualitative change, is at the same time the *unity of continuity and discontinuity*. "...Life and development in nature include both slow evolution and rapid leaps, breaks in continuity."[1]

If we deny development as the unity of the two forms (quantity and quality), then we must accept one of two possible but equally incorrect concepts of the world. Either we must regard all the richness of the world, the diversity of the phenomena of inorganic and organic nature, the multitudinous varieties of plants and animals, and man himself, as having always existed and as changing only in quantity, or else we must assume that all this was by some miracle suddenly brought into being. Both these notions have been held in the history of science and philosophy, but they have both been overthrown by the whole course of advancing knowledge and historical practice.

Both views have become widespread in social theories. All the reformist theories in the working-class movement are based on the one-sided exaggeration of continuity, of the quantitative gradualness of development, from which it is argued that capitalism will "grow" into socialism without social revolutions, by means of the gradual accumulation of socialist elements in bourgeois society. In contrast to the reformists, the anarchists, the petty-bourgeois revolutionists, completely deny the significance of quantitative, continuous forms of development and recognise only social cataclysms and rebellions. Assuming that social conditions can be changed only in this way, they fall prey to political adventurism and disregard the objective conditions that are essential for revolutionary leaps forward.

All qualitative change takes place in the *form of leaps*. A certain process ends in a leap, which denotes the moment of qualitative change of an object, the break-through, the critical stage in its development. In the general thread of development a new knot is tied. "Capitalism," wrote Lenin, "creates its own grave-digger, itself creates the elements of a new system, yet, at the same time, without a 'leap' these individual elements change nothing in the general

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Differences in the European Labour Movement*, Vol. 16, p. 349.

state of affairs and do not effect the rule of capital."[1]

Leap is a form of development that occurs much quicker than the form of continual development. It is the period of most intensive development, when the old and obsolete are transformed and make way for new, higher stages of development. Thus, social revolutions give a tremendous impetus to the development of the material and spiritual life of societies. The same significance is attached to "leaps" in science, which denote new and important discoveries.

Development thus proceeds as the unity of continuity and discontinuity (spasmodicalness), when one measure yields to, or is transformed into, another.

Modern science offers increasing evidence in favour of the view of objects and their development as the unity of continuity and discontinuity.

The qualitative differences in the forms of motion of matter—mechanical, physical, chemical and others—are regarded by science as "nodal points" in the process of the gradual differentiation of matter. Such "breaks in continuity" are the discrete (discontinuous) states of matter at its various structural levels (elementary particles, nuclei, atoms, molecules and so on). Evolutionary (gradual) and revolutionary (leap-like) forms in their unity constitute a law of social development.

Changes of quantity are transformed into qualitative changes in various ways, depending on the specific conditions in various spheres of reality. The concrete forms of this transformation, this leap from one state into another, are studied by the specialised sciences. Philosophy helps us to find our way in this great variety of forms and modes of transition, to single out certain most typical forms, without claiming, however, that these forms give an exhaustive picture, since life is always richer than any theory.

The typical and most general forms of leaps, of qualitative transformations, are as follows: (1) comparatively rapid and sharp transformation of one quality into another, when the object as an integrated system with its own inherent structure suddenly, as if at a stroke or in a series of strokes, undergoes fundamental qualitative change; and (2) gradual qualitative change, when the object changes not at once and not as a whole, but in certain of its aspects, elements, by means of the gradual accumulation of quantitative changes, and only as the result of such changes passes from one state into another.

What determines these different forms? Why does the leap take

[1] Ibid., p. 348.

place now in one form and now in another? The answer to this question is to be sought above all in the particular features of the *developing objects themselves.*

Nature and natural processes offer a multitude of examples when leaps and transformations from one quality to another take place in the form of rapid changes. Such are the qualitative transformations of elementary particles, chemical elements, chemical compounds, the release of atomic energy in the form of atomic explosions, and so on. On the other hand, there are objects in nature whose qualitative changes into other more complex and perfect objects involve very long processes and can occur, as a rule, only gradually. Such, for example, are the qualitative changes of some species of animals into others. Usually the two qualitative poles in such transformations are linked by many intermediate forms.

But however gradually a process of qualitative change proceeds, the transformation to the new state is a leap. "In spite of all gradualness," wrote Engels, "the transition from one form of motion to another always remains a leap...."[1] This is what distinguishes gradual qualitative changes from the gradual quantitative changes. The latter, while changing certain individual properties of a thing, do not affect its quality up to a certain point.

It would be wrong to regard the gradualness of qualitative changes, as if these changes simply accumulate in number until they oust the old quality entirely. In reality this process is much more complex. It is not simply the arithmetical addition of the elements of the new quality, but a path of gradual perfection, of gradual, sometimes imperceptible qualitative changes, a path that presupposes profound structural changes in the old quality, a number of intermediate stages and steps in the ascent to the ultimate result, that is, to completion of the leap.

The forms of this leap depend not only on the nature of the object but also on the conditions in which the object is placed. Thus, in conditions of natural radioactivity the disintegration of certain substances, uranium, for example, proceeds extremely slowly; semi-disintegration takes billions of years. But the same process of disintegration during the explosion of an atom bomb takes place instantaneously, because of chain reaction.

Historical experience has shown that qualitative changes, leaps, also take place in social development. Social revolutions, which radically transform the life of society, provide a convincing example.

The qualitative changes that occur in conditions of socialism

[1] F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring,* p. 85.

differ considerably from those that we observe in exploiting societies. Since there are no longer any antagonistic classes in socialist society, society as a whole is interested in bringing about the required changes; moreover, the very development of society proceeds not spontaneously but according to plan, in the form of conscious preparation for leaps ahead, and so the prevailing form here is a gradual transition from one qualitative state to another. But this does not, of course, exclude other forms of transformation, such as sharp and sudden changes in technical development, evoked by great discoveries, by the new technical possibilities of development of production, or by new forms of activity accelerating progress.

What has been said allows us to draw a general conclusion concerning the essence and significance of the law of transformation of quantitative into qualitative changes and vice versa. *This law states that there is an interconnection and interaction between the quantitative and qualitative aspects of an object thanks to which small, at first imperceptible, quantitative changes, accumulating gradually, sooner or later upset the proportion of that object and evoke fundamental qualitative changes which take place in the form of leaps and whose occurrence depends on the nature of the objects in question and the conditions of their development in diverse forms.* Knowledge of this law is vital to the understanding of development. It provides a guideline for examining and studying phenomena as the unity of their qualitative and quantitative aspects, for seeing the complex interconnections and interactions of these aspects, and the changes in the relationships between them.

3. The Law of the Unity and Struggle of Opposites

The contradiction between quality and quantity is only one of the manifestations of the general law that internal contradictoriness is inherent in all things and processes, and that this is the source and motive force of their development. Lenin called the study of contradictions the "nucleus" of dialectics.

The two main concepts of development are sharply opposed particularly over the question of contradictions. This opposition runs right through the history of philosophy and is still characteristic of philosophy today.

Many modern bourgeois philosophers flatly deny the dialectically contradictory essence of phenomena. They assume that only our *thoughts* may be contradictory, while objective *things* are free of all

contradictions.

The contradictions of thought or, as they are sometimes called, "logical contradictions", certainly do occur, they are the result of logical inconsistency, logical error. When we make contradictory statements about one and the same thing considered at the same moment and in the same relation (for instance, "the table is round" and "the table is not round"), such a contradiction of ideas is impermissible. The appearance of such contradictions in scientific theories testifies to their incorrectness or incompleteness. At the same time contradictions of ideas may conceal objective contradictions in phenomena themselves of which we are not yet aware. It is such objective contradictions that the opponents of dialectics refuse to acknowledge.

The world knows of no absolutely identical things or phenomena. When we speak of the similarity or identity of certain objects, their very similarity presupposes that they are in some way different, dissimilar, otherwise there is no sense at all in comparing them. This implies that even a simple outward comparison of two objects reveals the *unity of identity and difference*: every object is simultaneously identical to another and yet different from it. In this quite simple sense identity is not an abstract but a *concrete* identity containing within it an element of difference. Engels expressing this idea, said, that "*identity with itself* requires *difference from everything else* as its complement".[1]

The difference in an object is not only a difference in relation to another object but also a difference in relation *to itself*, that is, the given object, no matter whether we are comparing it with something else or not, contains a difference in itself. For example, a living being is a unity of identity and difference not only because it is both similar to and dissimilar from other living beings, but also because in the process of living it denies itself, or, to put it simply, it is moving towards its own end, its death.

When dialectical theory maintains that an object simultaneously exists and does not exist, that it contains within itself its own non-being, this must be understood in only one sense: an object is a unity of stability and changeability, of the positive and the negative, of what is dying out and what is entering life, and so on.

This means that every object, every phenomenon is a *unity of opposites*. What this important proposition implies above all is that opposite aspects and tendencies are inherent in all objects. Internal contradictions are an inseparable property of the structure of any object or process. Moreover, every object or group of objects has its

[1] F. Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, p. 215.

own specific contradictions which have to be discovered by concrete analysis. But a mere acknowledgement of the internal contradictoriness of phenomena does not fully explain the concept of the unity of opposites. It is very important to take into consideration the character of the connection and interaction between opposites, their structure. This structure is such that each of the aspects of the whole is entirely dependent on its opposite for its existence and this duality is not confined merely to their external relationships. The interconnection, *interdependence* and interpenetration of opposite aspects, properties and tendencies of the developing whole are an essential feature of any unity of opposites.

But the interdependence of opposites is only one of the specific features of dialectical contradiction. Another of its vital aspects is *mutual negation*. Because the two aspects of the whole are opposites they are not only interconnected but also mutually exclusive and mutually repellent. This factor is expressed in the concept of the struggle of opposites.

In its generalised form this concept comprises all kinds of mutual negation of opposites. In some cases, particularly in social life and partially in organic nature, this mutual exclusion of opposites is literally expressed in the term "struggle". Such, for example, is the struggle of classes and various political parties in society. In inanimate nature the term "struggle of opposites" applies chiefly to action and counteraction, attraction and repulsion, and so on. But no matter what concrete forms this struggle assumes, the main thing is that the dialectical contradiction implies also the element of mutual negation of opposites, and an extremely important element, because *the struggle of opposites is the motive force, the source of development*. This is why Lenin gives the following formula of dialectical development: "Development is the 'struggle' of opposites."[1]

What has been said about each of the elements of dialectical contradiction—the elements of "unity" and "struggle" of opposites—allows of an important conclusion. This conclusion was formulated by Lenin in the following words: "The unity (coincidence, identity, equal action) of opposites is conditional, temporary, transitory, relative. The struggle of mutually exclusive opposites is absolute, just as development and motion are absolute."[2] This means that the struggle of opposites naturally results in the disappearance of the existing object as a certain unity of opposites and the appearance of a new object with a new unity of opposites inherent in that particular object.

[1] V. I. Lenin, *On the Question of Dialectics*, Vol. 38, p. 360.
[2] Ibid.

The essence of the dialectical contradiction may be defined as an interrelationship and interconnection between opposites in which they mutually assert and deny each other, and the struggle between them serves as the motive force, the source of development. This is why the law in question is known as the *law of the unity and struggle of opposites.*

This law explains one of the most important features of dialectical development: motion, development takes place as *self-motion, self-development.* This concept is highly relevant to materialism. It means that the world develops not as the result of any external causes (say, "divine first impulse") but by virtue of its own laws, the laws of motion of matter itself.

The dialectical theory that the motion or development of nature is in fact self-motion, self-development, explains why many contemporary bourgeois philosophers are so vehement in their attacks on the proposition of the contradictory essence of things. Development understood in this way leaves no room for a mystical "creative force".

Some bourgeois philosophers recognise contradictions, for instance, the contradictions of capitalist society, but regard them as eternal, insoluble, "tragic", and so on. Others, on the contrary, try to minimise them and gloss them over. In this field there are many different angles of approach, but the anti-dialectical meaning remains one and the same.

Postulating that internal contradictions are inherent in all things and processes and comprise the motive force of the self-development of nature and society, materialist dialectics explains how this process takes place.

Contradictions are not something immobile and immutable. Once they have arisen, specific contradictions develop and pass through definite stages. A phenomenon cannot disappear and be replaced by another phenomenon until its contradictions are revealed and fully developed, because only in the process of such development are the preconditions for the leap into the new qualitative state created.

This process has two basic stages: (1) the stage of development, of the unfolding of the contradictions inherent in an object; (2) the stage of the resolution of these contradictions.

When it first begins to develop, a contradiction is in the nature of a difference. This difference then deepens into a manifest contradiction, whose opposite sides are less and less able to remain in the framework of the former unity. At this stage of development the contradiction becomes, to use Marx's expression, a relationship of opposites which is "a dynamic relationship driv-

ing towards resolution".[1]

Marx's *Capital* provides a classical example of such development and building up of contradictions in application to society. Marx shows that in striving for maximum profit the capitalists are compelled to develop what is, in essence, social production. But the more social production becomes, the more it enters into contradiction with the private property of the capitalists, the more insistently it demands the replacement of this property by public, socialist property.

The second stage, the stage of resolution of contradiction, is the natural culmination of the process of the development and struggle of opposites. Whereas the whole previous process takes place within the framework of unity, the interconnection of opposites, the stage of the resolution of contradiction signifies the removal of this unity, its disappearance, which coincides with a fundamental qualitative change in the object.

Materialist dialectics attaches great importance to the resolution of contradiction. No wonder, then, that in the hands of genuinely progressive forces, and particularly the proletariat, it serves as a powerful instrument of cognition and revolutionary transformation of the world.

The character of contradictions, their forms of development and means of resolution cannot be the same in both inorganic and organic nature, in nature and society, and in different social formations. Dialectics does not claim to provide a "register" of all possible contradictions. Its task is rather to point out the "strategy" of approach to phenomena. What the specific contradictions of particular objects are and how they are to be resolved are questions that must be decided by scientists in the appropriate fields of knowledge. At the same time it would be wrong to assume that these highly general laws and concepts formulated by dialectics do not develop and become more concrete under the influence of new facts and in new conditions. This can be seen from the category of contradiction itself.

The emergence of socialist society demanded that this category should be expressed in more specific terms. The founders of Marxism knew, of course, that in socialist society contradictions would have a different character, and they often noted the fact. But the question acquired paramount theoretical and practical significance when the construction of socialist society became a matter of practice. This was why Lenin attached such importance to it. In his critical remarks on Bukharin's *Economics of the Transition Period*,

[1] K. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, Vol. 3, p. 294.

where the concept of contradiction figured in an undifferentiated form, and was identified with the concept of antagonism. Lenin pointed out that antagonism and contradiction are not at all the same thing, that the former disappears under socialism while the latter remains.[1]

Antagonistic contradictions are those between hostile social forces, between classes that have fundamentally opposed aims and interests. The antagonistic character of contradictions also determines the forms of their development and the methods of their resolution. This involves an intensification and deepening of contradictions which naturally ends in a sharp conflict between the opposing sides and their polarisation. Accordingly the means of resolving such contradictions are consistent class struggle and social revolutions which destroy the supremacy of the obsolescent classes.

The *non-antagonistic* form of contradiction is the kind of contradiction that arises between classes, between social forces whose conditions of life determine the community of their fundamental goals and interests. Such are the contradictions between classes of working people—the working class and the peasantry, between the various elements of socialist society, and so on. Contradictions that occur in the development of the socialist mode of production, the state and other forms of social life under socialism, and contradictions in the process of the growing of socialist society into communist society, are also of a non-antagonistic character. A vitally important feature of such contradictions is that there is no objective necessity for the opposing sides and tendencies to become polarised into hostile extremes. The unity of the interests of society as a whole makes it possible to overcome these contradictions gradually, by means of planned economic activity and by changing the conditions that give rise to them, by means of educational work, and so on.

But one must not lose sight of the fact that for all the profound difference between antagonistic and non-antagonistic contradictions there is no gulf fixed between them. Lenin often hammered home the fact that with an incorrect policy non-antagonistic contradictions could be deepened and aggravated and under certain conditions acquire the features of antagonistic contradictions. It may be assumed that only with the building of developed socialism will non-antagonistic contradictions never turn into antagonistic.

The historical practice of the development of socialism has revealed all the harmfulness of the illusion that in the new conditions society is liberated of all contradictions, or that these con-

[1] See *Lenin Miscellany XI*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1929, p. 357 (in Russian).

tradictions are unimportant because of their non-antagonistic nature. Apart from the contradictions inherited from the old, capitalist society that require a certain amount of time to get rid of, there arise in the process of development of socialist society itself certain contradictions that are peculiar to that society; in fact, there could be no progress without them. The practical experience of history has forged a powerful weapon of struggle against all stagnation, conservatism, superficiality and complacency. This weapon is socialist criticism and self-criticism, of which Karl Marx in his day said that a genuine revolution can successfully develop only by subjecting itself to its constant and ruthless influence.

The difference between the forms of contradiction lies not only in their different social nature. Every single thing, and particularly such a complex formation as society, is a whole system of contradictions that have a certain structural interconnection. In such a structure contradictions may be basic or non-basic, major or minor, internal or external, and so on.

Basic contradictions are to be understood as those that characterise the object and determine its development from the moment of its appearance to its disappearance, and that determine all other, *non-basic* contradictions.

Every stage in the development of society has its *major* contradiction, i.e., a contradiction that determines the essence of that particular stage. For instance, in the bourgeois democratic revolution of February 1917 in Russia the major contradiction was between the landowner system and the tsarist autocracy on the one hand, and all the forces, particularly the working classes, that were opposed to them, on the other. A contradiction may change in the course of development from one stage to another, and a contradiction that was *minor* at one stage may under new conditions become *major*. Thus, the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie already existed in the period of the Revolution of February 1917, but it was not then the major contradiction. It became so only after the February Revolution. Correct definition of major and minor contradictions allows us to get our priorities right and to popularise slogans corresponding to the objective course of development.

What is the difference between *internal* and *external* contradictions? There are theories in philosophy that reduce contradiction merely to the relation between things and forces that are external to one another, to the clash between them. These are mechanistic theories, "theories of equilibrium", which regard things as being in a state of rest, free of internal contradictions, and, consequently,

deny the dialectical understanding of motion as self-motion, self-development.

Any object, being a relatively independent system, has its own internal contradictions, which are in fact the basic source of its development. The differences between several such objects are external contradictions. These are closely connected with the internal contradictions, and interact with them. If we regard an object as an element of a larger system which includes other objects, the contradictions between such objects become internal contradictions, that is, contradictions of the given, larger system. For instance, the relationships between the socialist and capitalist systems are external contradictions. But inasmuch as these opposed systems are part of a wider, all-embracing whole—contemporary world development—they are aspects of its internal contradiction. This is the basic, major contradiction determining the development of social phenomena in our epoch.

The law of the unity of opposites is of tremendous importance in our search for knowledge. "The condition for the knowledge of all processes of the world ... in their real life, is the knowledge of them as a unity of opposites,"[1] wrote Lenin. The question of how to express in human concepts motion, change and transition from one state into another is a crucial question that throughout the history of philosophy and science has been a challenge to the best minds and continues to challenge them today.

According to certain theories human concepts can give only static reflections, photographs, of changing things, and this is seen as setting a limit to knowledge. Hence the conclusion is drawn that there must always be antagonism between objects and the knowledge of them, and that only a certain inexplicable immediate feeling (mystical intuition) can express motion.

Dialectics has shown that true, concrete thought thinks in terms of contradictions that grasp the opposing sides of phenomena in their unity. It is capable of seeing not just one aspect of a contradiction and registering it in a rigid, static concept, but all aspects of contradiction, and not only their arrangement, but their connection, their interpenetration. This means that concepts must be as dialectical, that is, as mobile, flexible, plastic, interconnected and interpenetrating as the objects which they reflect.

Human concepts should embody in an ideal form the real contradictions, connection and interpenetration of opposites, their transmutations, and so on.

To recapitulate, we can now define the essence of the law of the

1 V. I. Lenin, *On the Question of Dialectics*, Vol. 38, p. 360.

unity and struggle of opposites. *According to this law all things, phenomena and processes possess internal contradictions, opposing aspects and tendencies that are in a state of interconnection and mutual negation; the struggle of opposites gives an internal impulse to development, leads to the building up of contradictions, which are resolved at a certain stage in the disappearance of the old and the appearance of the new.* Knowledge of this law helps us to obtain a critical understanding of the processes at work in the world, and to see what is obsolescent and what will replace it, to fight against everything that stands in the way of progress and to be intolerant of shortcomings, of all manifestations of stagnation, conservatism and dogmatism.

4. The Law of the Negation of Negation

We shall now deal with yet another important question of the doctrine of development. Is there any tendency that governs the direction of the infinite process of development? If so, then what is it? This question is also central to the struggle between various philosophical conceptions and theories and forms the subject of fierce controversy (particularly in its relation to social development).

In pre-Marxist philosophy there were cyclical theories which recognised the ascending development of society, but which assumed that on reaching its highest point society would be thrown back to its initial position and development would begin all over again. Such a theory was maintained by the Italian philosopher Giovanni Vico. The ideologists of the progressive bourgeoisie upheld the view that society was developing constantly, although they also regarded the bourgeois system as the peak of social progress. Later, with the decline of capitalist society, such philosophers as Oswald Spengler, for instance, put forward various pessimistic theories which assumed the inevitable destruction of bourgeois society to be the end of all social development.

When considering the transformation of quantitative into qualitative changes and the struggle of opposites, we saw that an essential part in the process of development is played by *negation*. Qualitative transformation is possible only as the negation of the old state. The contradictoriness of a thing signifies that it contains its own negation.

Negation is an inevitable and logical element in all development. "In no sphere," wrote Marx, "can one undergo a development

without negating one's previous mode of existence."[1] Nothing new could come about without this element. But what is negation? In ordinary consciousness the concept of negation is associated with the word "no"; to negate is to say "no", to reject something, and so on. There can certainly be no negation without rejecting something. But dialectics regards negation as a part of development, and therefore this concept has a far deeper meaning than in ordinary usage. "Negation in dialectics," wrote Engels, "does not mean simply saying no, or declaring that something does not exist, or destroying it in any way one likes."[2] The essence of dialectical development lies in the fact that it is a mode of negation that conditions further development.

Dialectical negation has two essential features: (1) it is a condition and factor of development, and (2) it is a factor in the connection between new and old. The first means that only the negation that serves as the precondition for the emergence of certain new, higher and more perfect forms is "positive negation". The second means that the new as negation of the old, of what has gone before, does not merely destroy, does not leave behind it a "desert", but merely "sublates" the old.

The term "sublation" expresses the meaning and content of dialectical negation: the previous state is simultaneously negated and preserved. It is preserved in a dual sense. First, without previous development there would be no foundation for the new forms. Second, everything that is preserved from the previous stage of development passes to the next stage in a substantially different form. Thus, certain forms of mental activity which developed in the animals have been passed on to man in a "sublated" form, and in man they have been transformed on the basis of the features that are peculiar to man (labour activity, the ability to think, and so on).

Development, however, is not confined to a single act of negation. Even if certain positive elements are preserved in the first negation, it is still the complete opposite of what was negated. The relationship between the initial form and the first negation is a relationship of two opposed forms. What happens next, after the first negation has produced a new form that is the opposite of the previous form? This can best be illustrated by tracing the development of some specific object from beginning to end.

Here is an example from the inquiry pursued by Marx in *Capital.* At the very beginning of its development social production assumed a form in which the workman was united with his means of labour,

[1] K. Marx, *Moralising Criticism and Critical Morality,* Vol. 6, p. 317.
[2] F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring,* p. 173.

that is, the instruments of labour belonging to the producer himself. Marx calls this the "infantile" form (in the sense that this was the childhood of the human race), because it was the form inherent in the primitive commune and small domestic agriculture connected with domestic production. But as time went on, the growth of the productivity of labour reached a point when the original primitive form combining the consumer and the instruments of labour became a brake on the further development of production. There then appeared private ownership of the means of labour and the latter were separated from the person who worked. This was the first dialectical negation of the initial form. But when it achieves its full development in capitalist society, this form of the division of labour and the means of labour, which in its time was the negation of their unity, itself logically prepares its own negation. It has completely exhausted itself and has to give way to a new and higher form. This is the second negation, the negation of the first negation, and for this reason known as the *negation of negation.*

From the above example we see that the necessity for the second negation, or the new stage of negation, depends on the following: the initial form and that which negates it are opposites, they contain an abstract one-sidedness which must be overcome for further development to take place. Hegel was therefore right when he defined the second negation, that is to say, the negation of negation as the *synthesis* that overcomes the first "abstract, untrue elements", taking "abstract" and "untrue" in the sense of their one-sidedness and incompleteness.[1]

Here we come to yet another important feature of the negation of negation. In the concluding stage of the whole cycle of development, at the stage of the second negation, certain features of the initial form from which development began are inevitably restored.

This dialectical character of development is vividly manifested in the development of knowledge. For instance, in the process of research into the nature of light, the idea was first advanced that it was a stream of light corpuscles or particles. Then the diametrically opposed theory of waves was put forward. The physics of the 20th century had to face the fact that neither of these views was a true explanation of reality. "We have two contradictory pictures of reality; separately neither of them fully explains the phenomena of light, but together they do!"[2] In other words, the contradiction

[1] See G. W. F. Hegel, *Sämtliche Werke,* F. Frommann, Stuttgart, Bd. 5, 1928, S. 345.

[2] A. Einstein and L. Infeld, *The Evolution of Physics. The Growth of Ideas from Early Concepts to Relativity and Quanta,* Simon and Schuster, New York, 1954, p. 278.

between two one-sidedly contradictory views was resolved by their higher synthesis in a new theory which regarded light as the unity of corpuscular and wave properties. Lenin describes this process of the development of knowledge, which is by nature the negation of negation, in the following words: "From assertion to negation—from negation to 'unity' with the asserted—without this dialectics becomes empty negation, a game, or scepsis."[1]

The effect of the law of the negation of negation is that development moves not in a straight line but in a spiral, so that the ultimate point coincides with the point of departure, but at a higher level, each coil denoting a more developed state. This is the sense in which we use the term "spiral of development".

The process of the negation of negation is often expressed in the terms: "thesis" (initial point of development), "antithesis" (first negation) and "synthesis" (second negation), which form a trinity that expresses the essence of development. The result is that the law of the negation of negation is often reduced to a purely formal and external device by means of which all the richness and complexity of objective development is arbitrarily subordinated to a rigid scheme. Even Hegel an idealist, himself prone to schematise, protested against such an understanding of dialectics, saying that the trinity is only a superficial, external aspect of the mode of cognition. Materialist dialectics is fundamentally opposed to any such formalistic approach or schematisation. Like any other law of dialectics, the law of the negation of negation does not impose any schemes, it merely guides inquiry in the right direction.

Analysis of the law of the negation of negation now allows us to answer the question we asked above, about whether any objective, law-governed tendency exists in the endless replacement of some phenomena by others, any tendency that determines the course of development.

Development is, in fact, a chain of dialectical negations, each of which not only rejects the previous links, but also preserves all that is positive in them, thus concentrating more and more in the further, higher links, the richness of development as a whole. The infinity of development lies not in the infinite arithmetical addition of one unit to another, but in the emergence of new and higher forms which create within themselves the preconditions for further development. Hence the general law-governed tendency of development, from the simple to the complex, from the lower to the higher, the tendency of *progressive, ascending motion.*

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Conspectus of Hegel's Book "The Science of Logic"*, Vol. 38, p. 227.

A characteristic feature of the process of the negation of negation is its *irreversibility*, that is, development that as a general tendency cannot be motion in reverse, from higher forms to lower forms, from the more complex to the less complex. This is due to the fact that every new stage, while synthesising in itself all the richness of the previous stages, constitutes the foundation for even higher forms of development.

In relation to the world as a whole, to the infinite Universe, it would be wrong, of course, to speak of one line of development, of the progressiveness of all development. In relation to individual systems, however, or their elements, the tendency to ascending development is clearly observable. But there must be no oversimplification in our understanding of progressive development. Like any dialectical process, it is realised in contradictions, through the struggle of opposites. Progress in some forms is accompanied by regress in others. Every ultimate form that results from ascending development creates the preconditions for its own negation. Progression itself is realised in the struggle of opposing tendencies and makes its way only through a forest of intersecting lines of development. Certain of these lines may lead backwards instead of forwards and thus express elements of regression. In short, progression must not be understood metaphysically, as a smooth process without deviations and zigzags. This fact is particularly relevant to social development, which is an arena for various classes and parties pursuing their own interests and fighting for their own aims.

One must not forget that the law of the negation of negation operates in different ways in different conditions and different objects. "Every kind of thing therefore," wrote Engels, "has a peculiar way of being negated in such a manner that it gives rise to a development, and it is just the same with every kind of conception or idea."[1]

Under socialism the dialectical negation of the old and assertion of the new is characteristically a matter of consciously dealing with problems as they arise, on a planned basis and under the control of society itself. The anarchistic view of the old as something entirely reactionary and only fit for destruction is alien to socialism. What is more, only socialist society, which comes to replace capitalist society, can, as historical experience has shown, save and preserve the greatest values of the material and intellectual culture accumulated by previous development. For this reason the self-styled "cultural revolutions" which under the pretext of struggle against "the old" destroy the precious, hard-won gains of the past have

1 F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p. 173.

nothing in common with socialism.

Thus the law of the negation of negation is a law whose operation conditions the connection and continuity between that which is negated and that which negates. For this reason dialectical negation is not naked, "needless" negation, rejecting all previous development, but the condition of development that retains and preserves in itself all the progressive content of previous stages, repeats at a higher level certain features of the initial stages and has in general a progressive, ascending character.

Chapter VI

CATEGORIES OF MATERIALIST DIALECTICS

Every science evolves its own concepts for the purpose of giving a more precise reflection of the objects and processes it studies. The joint efforts of scientists have produced concepts that are common to certain groups of sciences; they have also produced categories. Categories are the most general, fundamental concepts of philosophy.

1. General Characteristic of the Categories of Dialectics

With the help of categories philosophy studies and registers the most general properties, connections and relationships between things, the laws of development that operate in nature, society and in human thought. Categories, in the sense of universal forms of scientific thought, arose, developed, and are still developing, on the basis of social practice. They reflect the reality, the properties and relationships of the objective world that exists outside us.

The categories of materialist dialectics are a summing up of the knowledge, a generalisation of the experience of cognition and practice, of the whole previous history of mankind. They are the nodal points of cognition, the "stages" by which thought penetrates to the essence of things.

Categories are not some form of fixed knowledge: "...If *everything* develops, does not that apply also to the most general *concepts* and *categories* of thought? If not, it means that thinking is not connected with being. If it does, it means that there is a dialectics of concepts and a dialectics of cognition which has objective significance."[1] In the course of the history of thought the role and place of individual categories have also changed. The content of categories is particularly mobile. One has only to compare, for instance, how matter was understood in ancient times and how this category is interpreted in the contemporary picture of the universe.

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Conspectus of Hegel's Book "Lectures on the History of Philosophy"*, Vol. 38, p. 256.

Categories reflect the general properties, connections and relationships of the material world. Hence their tremendous *methodological* value and the need to apply them in the study of the concrete phenomena of nature, society and thought.

The general concepts of every science also play a methodological role. The categories of dialectics differ from the general concepts of the specialised sciences, however, in that the latter are applicable only to a certain sphere of thinking, while philosophical categories, as methodological principles, embrace the whole tissue of scientific thought, all fields of knowledge. The categories of philosophy, by constantly accumulating the results of the development of the specialised sciences, enrich their own content. At the same time no specialised sciences can do without general philosophical categories. The theoretical reproduction of reality, the trends and patterns of its development, its practical transformation can only be accomplished with their help.

Reflecting the properties and relations of objective reality, the categories also express the patterns of thought, they are the nodal points of the connection between subject and object, under which one can classify all the infinite variety of objects and phenomena. They are the "standpoints" from which we obtain our sensory perception of the world and our understanding of it. It is thanks to the categories that individual things are perceived and comprehended as particular manifestations of the whole. A person must master the categories in the course of his individual development in order to possess a capacity for theoretical thought.

One cannot obtain a correct understanding of a particular category merely by analysing it as such, that is, in isolation from other categories. In objective reality everything is interconnected, is in a state of general interaction. The categories that reflect the world are therefore also interconnected in a certain way. Each category reflects some aspect of the objective world, and all of them together "...*embrace* conditionally, approximately, the universal law-governed character of eternally moving and developing nature".[1]

Categories are so interconnected that they can be understood only as elements in a definite *system* of categories.

The categories of dialectics are closely connected with its basic laws. The fundamental laws of dialectics are expressed and formulated only through certain categories; otherwise they could not be expressed at all. Thus, the law of the unity and struggle of opposites is expressed through the categories of opposition, contradiction,

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Conspectus of Hegel's Book 'The Science of Logic'*, Vol. 38, p. 182.

etc. In their turn the laws of dialectics determine the relationship between the categories as expressing the general aspects and relationships of things. Thus, the relations between content and form, essence and phenomenon, necessity and chance are specific manifestations of the law of the unity and struggle of opposites. In the previous chapters we have examined several philosophical categories, for example, matter, motion, space, time, the finite and the infinite, consciousness, quantity, quality, proportion, and contradiction. In this chapter we shall examine other related categories.

2. The Individual, Particular and Universal

The first thing that comes to mind when we consider the world around us is its variable quantitative and qualitative diversity.

The world is a unity but it exists in the form of a totality of various things, phenomena and events that possess their own individual, unique attributes. The existence of separate objects and phenomena divided from one another in space and time and possessing individual qualitative and quantitative definition is characterised by the category of *the individual.* This category expresses that which distinguishes one object from another, that is inherent only in a given object.

Any object or process is only an element in some integrated system. Not a single thing or phenomenon exists by itself. Nothing can arise or remain in existence or even change without being connected with a large number of other things and phenomena.

The universality of the properties and relationships of things is expressed in the category of *the universal.* This category reflects the similarity of the properties, the aspects, of an object, the connection between the elements, the parts, of a given system and also between different systems. The universal may take the form of a similarity of properties and relationships of things, constituting a definite class or group, which may be registered, for example, in such concepts as "crystal", "animal", "man", and so on.

The universal does not exist before or outside the individual, just as the individual does not exist outside the universal. Any object is a unity of the universal and the individual. The *particular* is a kind of connecting link between the individual and the universal. For instance, production in general is an abstraction. It stresses what is universal and inherent in production in all epochs. At the same time this universal can be broken down into many divisions. It exists both as something particular (for example, in the conditions of a certain socio-economic formation), and as something individual (for

example, in a certain country).

The universal is not introduced into the individual from the sphere of pure thought. Both difference and unity (universal) are inherent in the objects and events of the real world. They are both objective indivisible aspects of being. Any one thing is both different from all other things and at the same time in some respect resembles them, possesses certain properties in common with other things.

Universality and difference are the relationship of the object to itself and to other things, characterising the stability and variability, equality and inequality, similarity and dissimilarity, identity and non-identity, imitability and inimitability, continuity and discontinuity of its properties, connections, relationships and tendencies of development.

We cannot take a single step without encountering the unity of universality and difference. According to Lenin, there is dialectics in the simplest phrases, for example, "Ivan is a person", "Zhuchka is a dog": "...The *individual is the universal*.... Consequently, the opposites (the individual is opposed to the universal) are identical: the individual exists only in the connection that leads to the universal."[1]

The universal and its relation to the individual is given different interpretations in different philosophical systems. The metaphysical philosophers usually divorced the individual from the universal and counterposed them to each other. In the Middle Ages the so-called Nominalists maintained that the universal had no real existence, that it was merely names, or words, and that only individual things with their properties and relationships actually existed. The Realists, on the contrary, assumed that the universal existed in reality as the spiritual essence of things, that it preceded individual objects and could exist independently of them. This controversy was continued in later times.

The problem of correlating the individual and the universal cried out for a solution when it came to analysing the laws of the historical process. Some thinkers tried, and are still trying, to assert that the sphere of social existence is "unique", and that all relationships in it are inimitably individual. No law can be established for that which does not repeat itself, and on this basis the law-governed nature of the historical process is rejected.

Is this position valid? No. In all their concreteness individual events actually do not repeat themselves. Every war, for example, taken in all its individuality, is unlike any other war. But in this

[1] V. I. Lenin, *On the Question of Dialectics*, Vol. 38, p. 361.

unique individuality of concrete events there is always something universal: their essential qualities, the types of internal and external connection. The fact that the Second World War was not like the Greco-Persian wars is no obstacle to the sociological study of various types of war.

In no way does the universal level down the individuality of events. It only testifies to the fact that this unique individuality is the concrete form of manifestation of the essentially universal.

The individual thing owes the concrete form of its existence to the law-governed system of connections within which it arose and exists as a qualitative entity. The individual is "dominated' by the universal. This "power" of the universal is not something supernatural. It is not hidden in certain forces that stand above individual things, but in the system of interacting individual things, where each thing is poured into the "cup" of the universal, revives it and partakes of its reviving juices. While existing and developing according to the laws of the universal, the individual at the same time serves as a precondition of the universal. This is the case, for example, in the development of animate nature. Through its individual changeability an organism acquires some new and useful attribute. This individual attribute may be passed on by heredity and in time become an attribute not of one individual but of a number of individuals, that is, an attribute of a variety within the framework of a given species. This variety may later become a new species. Consequently, an individual attribute becomes universal, generic. Diametrically opposed processes take place in the development of organisms, when a certain generic attribute begins to die out or atrophy. Such an attribute becomes an attribute of only a few organisms, and then appears only as an exception—in the form of atavism. In this case the universal becomes the individual.

The action of the universal as law is expressed in the individual and through the individual. But such a law cannot be applied to the world as a whole. In this case one cannot say that the universal *arises* from the individual or vice versa. Both universal and individual form a unity. While it appears to create the universal, the individual itself at the same time arises and moves according to definite laws. "...The individual exists only in the connection that leads to the universal.... Every individual enters incompletely into the universal, etc., etc. Every individual is connected by thousands of transitions with other *kinds* of individuals (things, phenomena, processes), etc."[1]

A correct appreciation of the dialectics of the individual, particu-

[1] Ibid.

lar, and universal, is of tremendous importance both in the field of knowledge and its practical application. Science is concerned with generalisations and operates with general concepts, and it is this which enables it to establish laws and arms us with foresight in our practical activities.

Scientific research may take two paths: the path from the individual as the point of departure of thought to the particular and from the particular to the universal, and also the path from the universal and general to the particular and from the particular to the individual. "In fact all real, exhaustive knowledge," wrote Engels, "consists solely in raising the individual thing in thought from individuality into particularity and from this into universality, in seeking and establishing the infinite in the finite, the eternal in the transitory. The form of universality, however, is the form of self-completeness, hence of infinity; it is the comprehension of the many finites in the infinite."[1]

Appreciation of the dialectical interaction of the individual, particular and universal arms us with a method of knowing the phenomena of social life. The contemporary revisionists attempt to deny or belittle the significance of the general laws of socialist construction. They absolutise the individual and the particular and try to produce "models" of socialism that are applicable only to one or another country; this inevitably results in national self-isolation, in the opposition of national interests to international interests. No less dangerous is dogmatism, the essence of which lies in absolutising general truths, in an inability to analyse and appreciate the particular features of each country in concrete terms. The successes of the international communist movement depend to a great extent on how comprehensively the correlation of the general laws of social revolution and the national peculiarities of the various countries, or specific regional features, is taken into consideration.

3. Cause and Effect

The concepts of cause and effect have evolved in the process of social practice and cognition of the world. In them thought reflects the vital laws of the objective world, knowledge of which is necessary for man's practical activity. When a person finds out the causes of phenomena and processes he is able to influence them, to recreate them artificially, to bring them to life or to prevent their appearance. Ignorance of the causes and the conditions that evoke

[1] F. Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, p. 234.

phenomena render a person helpless. And conversely, knowledge of causes offers people and society the opportunity of taking effective action.

Knowledge of phenomena and processes is above all knowledge of the causes of their emergence and development. Causality is one of the forms of the universal law-governed connection of phenomena. In formulating the concept of "cause" and "effect" man isolates certain aspects of the whole objective process. "In order to understand the separate phenomena, we have to tear them out of the general interconnection and consider them in isolation, and *then* the changing motions appear, one as cause and the other as effect."[1]

Cause and effect are related concepts. A phenomenon that brings into being another phenomenon is, in relation to that phenomenon, its *cause*. The result of the action of a cause is *effect*. Causality is an internal connection between phenomena in which whenever one exists the other must necessarily follow. For example, the heating of water is the cause of its turning into steam, because whenever water is heated the accompanying process is the formation of steam.

Cause precedes effect in time. But this does not mean that every previous phenomenon is in a causal relationship with the phenomenon that follows it. Night precedes morning, but it is not the cause of morning. One must not confuse causal connection with the temporal sequence of phenomena. The superstitious person will sometimes say that the cause of a war was a comet or a solar eclipse, or some other natural or social phenomenon that occurred before the outbreak of war.

Cause should be differentiated from *occasion*. *Occasion* is an event which immediately precedes another event and makes it possible, but does not necessarily engender or determine it. The connection between occasion and effect is external (superficial) and inessential.

The causal connection of phenomena is objective and universal in character. All phenomena in the world, all changes and processes must be induced by certain causes. There is no such thing as a causeless phenomenon, nor could there be. Every phenomenon must have its cause. We are able to detect the causal connection of phenomena with varying degrees of accuracy. The causes of some are still unknown to us, but they objectively exist. Thus, medicine has not yet fully discovered the cause of cancer, but this cause exists and will eventually be discovered.

[1] Ibid., p. 232.

There is intense conflict between materialism and idealism over the question of causality. The materialists acknowledge objective causal connection of phenomena that is independent of both will and consciousness, and its more or less accurate reflection in the human consciousness. The idealists, on the other hand, either deny the causality of all phenomena of reality or deduce causality not from the objective world, but from the consciousness, from reason, from the action of imaginary supernatural forces.

The proposition that all phenomena are causally conditioned, expresses the law of causality. Philosophers who acknowledge this law and apply it to all phenomena are called *determinists*. Philosophers who deny the law of causality are called *indeterminists*. The law of causality demands that all phenomena of nature and society be explained through natural causes, and rules out any possibility of their being due to supernatural forces. Consistent materialistic determinism leaves no room for God or any kind of miracle, mysticism, or the like.

The history of philosophy tells us that the English philosopher Hume denied the objectivity of causal connection. Hume's proposition that we obtain our knowledge of the causal connection of phenomena from experience is correct, but the rest of his argument goes off on the wrong track. Hume reduced experience to subjective sensations and denied that they possessed any objective content. In experience we observe that one thing follows another, but, according to Hume, in the first place we have no ground for believing that the former may be the cause of the latter, and secondly, there are no grounds, proceeding from past and present experience, for drawing conclusions about the future. Hume's conclusion boils down to the following: causality is merely a sequential, habitual connection of sensation and idea, and prediction on this basis is expectation of that connection. Our past experience gives us grounds for expecting that in the future friction will give rise to heat, but we have not and cannot have any assurance of the objectivity and necessity of this process.

Proceeding from the data of science, dialectical materialism asserts that practice is the proof of the objectivity of causality. Engels wrote: "...The regular sequence of certain natural phenomena can by itself give rise to the idea of causality: the heat and light that come with the sun; but this affords no proof, and to that extent Hume's scepticism was correct in saying that a regular *post hoc* can never establish a *propter hoc*. But the activity of human beings *forms the test* of causality. If we bring the sun's rays to a focus by means of a concave mirror and make them act like the rays of an ordinary fire, we thereby prove

that heat comes from the sun."[1]

Kant did not agree with Hume that causality was merely a habitual conjunction of sensations. Kant recognised the existence of causal connection as necessary in character, though not in the objective world but in the mind. He did not attribute this to experience; causality existed as an *a priori*, innate category of intellect, on the basis of which various perceptions were linked together into a proposition.

The idealistic views of Hume and Kant on causality are reproduced in various versions by neo-Kanitians and also by the positivists, particularly the Machists. Ernst Mach asserted that there is no cause and effect in nature, but that all forms of causality spring from our subjective desires. The view of Hume on causality is repeated by Bertrand Russell, who regards the concept of cause as a pre-scientific generalisation serving only as a guide to action. The only difference between Hume and Russell in their interpretation of causality is that according to Russell the law of causality is based not on habit, as maintained by Hume, but on an animal faith which has become deeply embedded in the language: "Belief in the external causation of certain kinds of experiences is primitive, and is, in a certain sense, implicit in animal behaviour."[2]

Many contemporary idealist philosophers insist on the idea that the word "cause" should be excluded from philosophical terminology. Causality, in their view, is as obsolete as monarchy. The law of causality is replaced by the law of *functional connection*; one must not say that phenomenon A causes phenomenon B; one must say that A and B depend on each other (A is always accompanied by B, precedes it or follows it).

One can envisage all kinds of dependencies, including external, inessential and even arbitrary dependencies, in the form of functional connection. The relationship of cause and effect may also be envisaged in the form of functional dependency, effect being a function of cause. However, this obscures everything that really matters in causality; cause as a real phenomenon engenders and conditions effect, which is another real phenomenon. The idealists dissolve causality into functional dependency on the pretext that science is not interested in how phenomena arise, or whether there is a cause of their existence; it is only interested in whether there is any dependency between phenomena (or quantities) which can be expressed by a definite formula. But this is a fallacious point of

[1] Ibid., p. 230.

[2] Bertrand Russell, *Human Knowledge. Its Scope and Limits*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1962, p. 456.

view. Knowledge of real causal connection is the basis of people's practical activity. Knowing causes, we can evoke phenomena desirable for society or, on the contrary, combat those that are undesirable or harmful.

Some idealists substitute for causal connection the logical connection of *ground* and *consequent*. But there is a distinction between the two. Ground in formal logic is any idea from which another idea follows. For example, the statement that there is a normal temperature in the room follows as the consequent of another idea, that the thermometer shows 20°C. The temperature reading is not the cause of the normal temperature in the room, but the ground for our conclusion about the temperature there.

Causality is the connection not of ideas in an inference, but the connection between real phenomena, one of which evokes the other. The logical connection of ideas in our reasoning (the connection of ground and consequent) is a reflection of the relationship of things in reality, including their causal conditionality. From the difference between cause and ground it does not follow, of course, that in the sphere of thought only purely logical connections operate, that the principle of causality is replaced by the principle of sufficient ground. Any thought is causally conditioned.

The principle of causality is attacked by some Western physicists, who maintain that modern physics has disposed of the idea that all phenomena have a cause of their existence. They believe there is no causal conditionality in microprocesses. Not a single microparticle, for example, the electron, obeys the law of causality; each one chooses its path freely from the various possibilities. The reason given is usually the uncertainty relation. It is true that whereas in the macroprocesses one can simultaneously define both the position and velocity of a body, the position (coordinates) and velocity (impulse) of a microparticle cannot be simultaneously defined with unlimited accuracy. This law of the motion of the microobjects discovered by physicists does not fit in with the notion of causality that was characteristic of the science of the 17th and 18th centuries and has become known in history as Laplacian determinism (from the name of the French scientist Pierre Simon de Laplace).

The Laplacian, or mechanistic, form of determinism arose from the study of the external, mechanical motion of macroobjects, and assumes the possibility of simultaneous exact knowledge of coordinates and impulse. In describing the processes at work within the atom we encounter the special properties of particles (simultaneously corpuscular and wave), and here the former concepts of coordinates and impulse evolved for macroobjects are not applicable. But from the principle of the uncertainty relation in the microcosm

it does not follow that we should deny causality. The law of causality maintains only one thing: all phenomena have a cause. Just how causality operates in certain concrete cases, whether it is possible to define simultaneously the coordinates and velocity of particles with unlimited accuracy, is another question whose solution involves a knowledge of the concrete properties of the respective objects.

Modern physics provides rich factual material confirming the universality of the law of causality and the diversity of forms in which it is manifested. Thus, knowing the angle at which the electron and positron collide (in certain conditions they turn into two photons), and also their velocities, one can predict the path of motion of the two photons. Surely this proves the existence of causality in the microcosm. Microprocesses obey certain laws, they follow a certain sequence.

The objective character of the causal connection of all phenomena in reality was substantiated and defended by pre-Marxist materialists, but they confined themselves to examining the mechanical forms of causality, where cause is always external in relation to effect. Materialist dialectics has overcome the limitations of the mechanistic metaphysical interpretation of causality. It has shown that the connection between cause and effect is of a *reciprocal nature*. The cause produces the effect, but the effect may also influence the cause and change it. In this process of interaction the cause and effect change places, "...so that what is effect here and now will be cause there and then, and vice versa".[1] For example, the development of capitalism in Russia was the cause of the abolition of serfdom, but the abolition of serfdom became in its turn the cause of a further acceleration of the development of capitalism.

The interaction of cause and effect implies their constant influencing each other, with the result that both cause and effect are modified. This interaction becomes the internal cause (*causa sui*—cause of itself) of the changes in the phenomena of reality. If we see the world as the interaction of different phenomena, we realise that its motion and development require no external push, no supernatural force, such as God. This is why Engels regarded as correct Hegel's proposition that "reciprocal action is the true *causa finalis* of things".[2]

Interacting forces and factors are not of equal value, of course. It is the task of science to reveal decisive, determining causes in the

[1] F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p. 33.
[2] Ibid., p. 231.

system of interacting forces.

The interaction of cause and effect is influenced by the surrounding phenomena, which are summed up in the term *conditions*. Conditions are phenomena that are necessary for the occurrence of a certain event, but do not in themselves induce it. Thus a pathogenic organism may cause illness, depending on the conditions, that is, on the state of health of the person it attacks. Some of these conditions may encourage the effect, while others may prevent it. Depending on the conditions, one and the same phenomenon may be engendered by different causes and, on the contrary, one and the same cause may produce different effects. To illustrate, tremendous energy may be obtained both from the splitting of the uranium nucleus, and from the synthesis of the nuclei of hydrogen into helium nuclei.

Despite their diversity the causal interconnections of phenomena do not account for all the wealth of connections in the world. Lenin wrote: "Causality, as usually understood by us, is only a small particle of universal interconnection, but ... a particle not of the subjective but of the objectively real interconnection."[1] Phenomena enter into various relationships: temporal, spatial, and so on, which are related to causality but cannot be reduced to that category. Science cannot confine itself to studying only the causal interconnections of phenomena; it must study phenomena in all the diversity of their law-governed connections.

4. Necessity and Chance

As we have seen, the law-governed connections and relationships of things are essential and necessary. *Necessity* is the stable, essential connection of things, phenomena, processes and objects of reality conditioned by the whole preceding course of their development. The necessary stems from the essence of things and, given certain conditions, is bound to occur. A distinction should be drawn between necessity and inevitability. Not everything that is necessary is inevitable. Necessity is inevitable when all other possibilities have been ruled out and there is only one left.

But does everything that happens in the world occur of necessity? No, there are also *chance* events. Chance is what under certain conditions may occur or may not occur, may happen in a certain way or may happen otherwise.

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Conspectus of Hegel's Book "The Science of Logic"*, Vol. 38, p. 160.

The religious view of the world holds that everything in the Universe, in the life of society and of the individual, is preordained by God or by fate, or by the world spirit, whose blind force is irreversible. Belief in fate, in predestination, is known as *fatalism.*

Ignorance of dialectics usually leads to an antithesis between necessity and chance, one of which is supposed to exclude the other. Democritus asserted, for instance, that everything occurs only through necessity. People, he said, invented the idol of chance so that they could use it as a pretext for their own unreasoning. Nearly all philosophers who deny chance identify it with the absence of cause. Hence the fallacious conclusion that since everything has its cause, chance is impossible. It is alleged that we describe those phenomena whose cause we cannot discover or predict as chance phenomena, whereas these phenomena in themselves are, in fact, not accidental but necessary. Spinoza believed, for instance, that there is nothing accidental in nature, that all is determined by natural necessity. The French materialists of the 18th century also asserted that everything occurs of absolute necessity and that there is no chance in the world at all. Our whole life, said Holbach, is a line that we at Nature's bidding must draw on the surface of the globe without any possibility of deviating from it for a single moment.

The absolutising of necessity and denial of chance follow logically from the mechanistic world outlook. Its most characteristic expression was in the stand taken by Laplace. "All phenomena," he wrote, "even those that are so insignificant as to appear independent of the great laws of nature are as necessary an effect of them as the revolutions of the Sun. When one is ignorant of the bonds that unite them to the entire system of the Universe, one makes them depend on ultimate causes or on chance, according to whether they happen and proceed with regularity or without any apparent order; these imaginary causes have successively receded with the boundaries of our knowledge and disappear entirely in the face of sound philosophy, which sees in them nothing but the expression of an ignorance of which we ourselves are the true causes."[1]

However, necessity, if absolutised, turns into its opposite. Rejecting chance, the French materialists of the 18th century reduced necessity to the status of chance. Holbach asserted that a monarch's suffering from indigestion, or a woman's whim are sufficient causes to make men go to war, to lay cities in ruins, to spread starvation and infection and create misery and grief for many centuries to come.

[1] Laplace, Op. cit., pp. 2-3.

Present-day positivists deny the existence of necessity in nature and society. Thus, according to L. Wittgenstein, there is only logical necessity—the necessity that one statement must follow another. Moreover, logical necessity does not reflect any objective laws but stems from the nature of language.

Metaphysical thinking gives rise to a false alternative: either the world is dominated by chance, in which case there is no necessity, or else, there is no such thing as chance and all that occurs is inevitable.

In reality necessity does not exist in "pure form". Any necessary process occurs in a multiplicity of accidental forms.

The main difference between necessity and chance is that the appearance and the existence of the necessary is conditioned by essential factors, whereas chance events are usually conditioned by inessential factors.

It would be wrong to think that phenomena can be only either necessary or accidental. The dialectics of necessity and chance lies in the fact that *chance is a form of the manifestation of necessity and its complement.*

Accidents can, in the course of development, become necessity. Thus, the law-governed attributes of one or another biological species appeared at first as accidental deviations from the features of another species. But these accidental deviations establish themselves and accumulate, and the necessary qualities of the living organisms are formed on their basis.

The factor of chance has never remained outside the field of vision of scientific knowledge, even when chance events are abstracted as something of secondary importance. The fundamental aim of knowledge is to reveal what is governed by law, what is necessary. But it does not follow from this that the accidental belongs only to the field of our subjective notions and should therefore be ignored in scientific research. Through the analysis of various accidental, individual facts science moves on to the discovery of what lies at the bottom of things, of a certain necessity.

Appreciation of the dialectics of necessity and chance is an important factor in correct, practical creative activity. A good many discoveries in science and inventions in technology have been made thanks to a lucky coincidence. However well calculated our actions, something is always left to chance. The development of production and science tends to take man out of the power of unfortunate accidents. Under socialism people are acquiring more and more opportunities of controlling social processes, planning the economy and culture and thus safeguarding society from the harmful effects of chance.

The distinction between statistical and dynamic laws, which plays a large part in science, is based on appreciation of the influence of chance.

Dynamic laws are a form of necessary causal connection in which the interrelation between cause and effect is univalent; in other words, if we know the initial state of one system we are able to predict its further development. Thus, the prediction of solar or lunar eclipses is built on calculation of the dynamic laws of the movement of celestial bodies.

Statistical laws, unlike dynamic laws, are the dialectical unity of necessary and chance attributes. In this case the subsequent states that follow from the initial state are not unique and can be predicted only to a certain degree of probability.

Here are some examples. If you buy a lottery ticket it does not follow that you are bound to win a prize. You may win or you may lose. Winning something in a lottery is a typical example of a chance event. The likelihood of such an event is expressed by the concept of *probability*. If the event never comes about, then probability is zero. If it is bound to come about, its probability is expressed by the unit one. All chance events have a probability between zero and one. The more often the chance event occurs the greater its probability.

The concept of probability is closely connected with the concept of uncertainty. Uncertainty arises when there is a choice to be made from several objects. Probability and the measure of uncertainty have a quite simple interdependence: the less the probability of choice the greater the uncertainty.

A characteristic feature of statistical laws is the fact that they are based on chance that has a certain stability. This means that they are applied only to large groups of phenomena, each of which has a chance character. Such mass phenomena as accumulation of gas molecules, for example, obey statistical laws. The motion of an individual molecule in relation to the laws that prevail in the whole group is accidental, but from this intermingling of chance movement of individual molecules there is formed a necessity that manifests itself not completely, or perhaps not at all, in each individual case.

There is also a law of large numbers, which expresses the dialectics of the necessary and the accidental. This law runs as follows: the combined effect of a large number of accidental factors produces, under certain, rather common conditions, results almost independent of chance. In other words, the amassing of a large number of individual cases, phenomena, leads to the levelling of their accidental deviations in one direction or another and to the forma-

tion of a definite trend, of something law-governed. This trend or law is called statistical.

Manifesting itself in a mass of individual phenomena, statistical law with its specific interrelation of cause and effect, of necessity and chance, of the individual and universal, of whole and parts, of possibility and probability, constitutes the objective basis on which the application of statistical methods of research is based.

5. Possibility and Reality

The categories of possibility and reality occupy an important place in the well-stocked armoury of modern theoretical thinking. Like all other categories of dialectics, they reflect the universal connections and relations of things, the process of their change and development.

Nothing can come from nothing and the new can arise only from certain preconditions conceived in the womb of the old. The existence of the new in its potential state is, in fact, *possibility*. A child comes into the world. He possesses a great number of potentialities—the possibility of sensing, feeling, thinking and speaking. Given the right conditions, the possibility becomes *reality*. By reality in the broad sense of the term we mean everything that actually exists, in embryo, in maturity, and in the state of passing away. This is a unity of the individual and the universal, the essence and the diverse forms of its manifestation, the necessary and the accidental. In the narrower sense we mean by reality a realised possibility—something that has come about, something that has developed. There is nothing in the world that is not either a possibility or a reality, or "on the way" from the one to the other.

The process of development is the dialectical unity of possibility and reality. Possibility is organically linked with reality. The possible and the real interpenetrate one another. After all, the possible is one of the forms of reality in the broad sense of the word; it is internal, *potential* reality.

Reality has "priority" in the interconnection between the categories of possibility and reality, although possibility precedes reality in time. But possibility itself is only one of the elements of that which already exists as reality.

While emphasising the unity of possibility and reality we must at the same time bear in mind the difference between them. The possibility of man's knowing the world in its entirety differs essentially from the fulfilment of this possibility in reality.

There are various kinds of possibility. Possibilities may be *uni-*

versal or *individual.* A universal possibility expresses the preconditions of the general aspects of individual objects and phenomena, while individual possibility expresses the preconditions of their individual aspects and features. A universal possibility is conditioned by the laws of development of reality, while an individual possibility depends on the specific conditions of existence and action of these general laws. Every individual possibility is unique.

Possibilities may be *real (concrete)* or *formal (abstract).* We call a possibility real if it expresses the law-governed, essential tendency of development of the object in question, and if the necessary conditions for its realisation exist in reality. A formal possibility expresses an inessential tendency of development of the object while the necessary conditions for its fulfilment are not present in reality. Only formal grounds can be given in its favour. "It is possible that tonight the Moon will fall upon the Earth, because the Moon is a body separated from the Earth and may therefore fall upon it just as does a stone that has been thrown into the air; it is possible that the Sultan of Turkey will become Pope, because he is a man and, as such, may be converted to Christianity, may become a Catholic priest, etc."[1]

Formal possibility does not in itself contradict objective laws. In this sense it differs fundamentally from *impossibility*, that is, from that which cannot, in principle, under any conditions be realised. For example, no one can make a perpetual motion machine, because this contradicts the laws of the conservation of energy. In both theoretical and practical activity it is extremely important to be able to distinguish the possible from the impossible.

A formal possibility may be regarded as a possibility only in abstraction from all other possibilities. Any amount of formal possibilities fail to become reality. Bourgeois ideologists assert, for instance, that in the conditions of capitalism any poor man may become a millionaire. But this is a formal possibility because millions of poor men remain poor men and even become beggars before one becomes a millionaire. The difference between real and formal possibility is to a certain extent relative. A perfectly real possibility may be lost or remain objectively unrealised because of certain circumstances. It then becomes a formal possibility. At the same time a formal possibility may turn into a real possibility. For example, the possibility of manned space flight was at one time only formal, but has now become real.

As we have said, possibility precedes reality in time. But reality,

[1] G. W. F. Hegel, *Werke,* Bd. 6, S. 286.

as the result of previous development, is at the same time a starting point of further development. Possibility arises in the given reality and is fulfilled in a new reality.

As hidden tendencies expressing the different directions in the development of an object, possibilities characterise reality from the standpoint of its future. All possibilities are "aimed" at realisation and possess a certain direction. But this orientation on the future does not signify that, as the fatalists assert, the final result of any process in the world is predestined from the very beginning and is utterly inevitable. Dialectical materialism proceeds from the fact that development is not the unfolding of a ready-made collection of possibilities, but a constant process of generation of possibilities within the framework of reality, and their conversion into a new reality.

Like everything in the world possibilities develop: some of them grow, others wither away.

Certain *conditions* are required for a possibility to become a reality.

There is a substantial difference between the process of realisation of a possibility in nature and its realisation in human society. In nature the realisation of a possibility occurs on the whole spontaneously. Not so in human society. History is made by people. So a great deal depends on their will, consciousness and initiative in the process of realisation of the possibilities invested in social development. Under socialism all the necessary conditions exist for turning the possibility of building communism into a reality. But these conditions cannot automatically lead to communism. The possibilities of building communist society can be realised only by the creative efforts of the Soviet people, led by the CPSU.

6. Content and Form

Any object of reality is a unity of content and form. Content cannot just exist in the world by itself; it must have some kind of form.

By *content* is meant the composition of all the elements of an object, the unity of its properties, internal processes, connections, contradictions and trends of development. For example, the content of an organism is not merely the sum total of its organs but the whole actual process of its life activity proceeding in a certain form.

By *form* is meant the mode of external expression of content, the relatively stable definiteness of the connection of the elements of content and their interaction, the type and structure of the content.

Form and content constitute a certain relationship between features of an object that are not only different but opposed to one another. Moreover, the division of an object into form and content exists only within the framework of their inseparable unity, and their unity exists only as something internally divided.

There is no unbridgeable gap between form and content. They may pass into each other. For example, thought is an ideal form of reflection of objective reality and at the same time it makes up the content of neuro-physiological processes.

Form is not something external which is superimposed on content. For example, a fluid in a state of weightlessness and left to itself acquires a spherical form. The most splendid idea cannot produce a work of art if it is not clothed in a corresponding artistic form, in artistic images. "It may be said of the *Iliad* that its content is the Trojan War or, more specifically, the wrath of Achilles; this tells us everything but at the same time very little, because that which makes the *Iliad* what it is, is the poetic form in which its content is expressed."[1]

Form is a unity of the internal and external. As the means of connection of the elements of content, form is something internal. It constitutes the structure of the object, and becomes, as it were, an element of the content. As the means of connection of the given content with the content of other things, form is something external. Thus the internal form of a work of art is primarily the theme, the means of connection of the artistic images and ideas that make up its content. The external form is the sensually perceived appearance of the work, its outward presentation. "In considering the opposition between form and content we must not forget that the content is not formless, and that form is simultaneously contained in the content itself and is also external to it."[2]

Forms differ according to the degree of their universality. A form may be the means of organisation of an individual object, a class of objects or an infinite number of objects.

The problem of the correlation of form and content has been treated in various ways by various philosophical schools. According to Aristotle, content and form exist in the beginning as something independent of each other and only subsequently, when something takes shape, do they enter into a close connection. According to Aristotle, the primary form, or the form of forms, is God.

In contemporary bourgeois philosophy the relationship of form and content is usually distorted, in the sense that form is divorced

[1] Ibid., S. 265.
[2] Ibid., S. 264.

from content and absolutised. The absolutising of form leads to formalism and abstractionism in art. Form becomes a self-sufficient value.

Form and content are opposites making up a unity. Their inseparable unity manifests itself in the fact that a certain content is "clothed" in a certain form.

Content is the primary aspect; the form of organisation depends on what is organised. Content is not formed by some external force, it forms itself. Between form and content there exist internal contradictions. The emergence, development and overcoming of these contradictions are one of the most essential and universal expressions of development through the struggle of opposites. Listing the elements of dialectics, Lenin writes, "...the struggle of content with form and conversely. The throwing off of the form, the transformation of the content".[1]

The categories of form and content are crucial to the understanding of the dialectics of development. A form that corresponds to content promotes and accelerates the development of content. There must, however, come a time when an old form ceases to correspond to the changed content and begins to act as a brake on its further development. A conflict arises between form and content which is resolved by the breakdown of the obsolete form and the appearance of a new form that corresponds to the new content. This new form exerts an active influence on the content and promotes its development.

The unity of form and content presupposes their relative independence and the active role of form in relation to content. The relative independence of form is expressed, for example, in the fact that it may lag a little way behind the development of content. A change of form is a reorganisation of the connection within the object. This process takes place in time, is realised through contradictions and collisions; for example, in the conditions of an antagonistic society it is related to the struggle against the forces of reaction, against the forces that stand guard over the old system.

When form lags behind content they cease to correspond to each other. For instance, production relations, which are a form in respect of the productive forces of a society, correspond to the trend of development of the productive forces during the ascending period in the development of a given social-economic formation, but in the period of decline (for example, capitalism at the stage of

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Conspectus of Hegel's Book "The Science of Logic"*, Vol. 38, p. 222.

imperialism) they lag behind these forces and retard their development.

The relative independence of form and content is also expressed in the fact that one and the same content may take various forms. But one and the same form may have a different content: the laws of phenomena that are different in nature may be expressed by the same formula, for instance.

Appreciation of the interconnection between content and form and their relative independence is particularly important in practical activity, when skilled use of the form of organisation of labour, of the production process and the distribution of manpower, may decide the course and outcome of the project. The choice and elaboration of flexible forms in revolutionary struggle constitute one of the most important tasks of the communist and workers' parties.

7. Essence and Appearance

Essence and appearance are categories expressing different aspects of things, stages of knowledge, different depths in our understanding of an object. Human knowledge proceeds from the external form of an object to its internal organisation. Knowledge of an object begins with determining its external properties, the relationships of things in space. Getting to know their causal and other profound law-governed relationships and properties leads to the disclosure of essence. The logic of the development of knowledge and the needs of social practice have compelled people to draw a strict distinction between what constitutes the essence of an object and what that object appears to be to them.

Dialectical materialism proceeds from the fact that both essence and appearance are universal objective characteristics of things.

What is meant by knowing the *essence* of an object? This means that we have understood the cause of its origin, the laws of its existence, the internal contradictions and tendencies of development inherent in it, and its determining properties.

The essence of the capitalist mode of production is private ownership of the means of production or the separation of the immediate producers—workers—from the means of production. This essence of capitalism manifests itself in human exploitation, in the private-property ideology. The essence of socialism is social ownership of the means of production, the absence of human exploitation, the ever fuller satisfaction of the growing needs of the working people through the constant development and improve-

ment of production, the planning of social development, and the social, political and ideological unity of the people.

The essence of any process may be revealed in various degrees. Our thinking moves not only from appearance to essence, but from the less profound to the more profound essence. "Human thought goes endlessly deeper from appearance to essence, from essence of the first order, as it were, to essence of the second order, and so on *without end.* "[1]

The category of essence expresses the special reality which constitutes, as it were, the "foundation" of an object, something stable and fundamental in its content. Essence is the organising principle, the nodal point of connection between the basic features and aspects of an object.

The category of the universal is closely linked with the category of essence. That which constitutes the essence of a definite class of objects is at the same time their universality.

Essence is what is important, determining (necessary) in an object. When we speak of essence, we have in mind something that proceeds according to law: "...*Law* and *essence* are concepts of the same kind (of the same order), or rather, of the same degree, expressing the deepening of man's knowledge of phenomena, the world...."[2] For example, Mendeleyev's Periodic Law reveals the essential internal connection between the atomic weight of an element and its chemical properties.

Essence and law, however, are not identical. Essence is wider and richer. For example, the essence of life lies not merely in any one law, but in a whole complex of laws. When describing the essence of an object, we use categories close to the category of essence but not identical with it: the individual in the many, the universal in the individual, the stable in the changeable, the internal, the law-governed.

And what is *appearance*? Appearance is the outward manifestation of essence, the form of its expression. Unlike essence, which is hidden from man, appearance lies on the surface of things. Essence as something internal is contrasted to the external, changeable aspect of things. When we talk of appearance as something external and essence as something internal, we have in mind not a relationship in space, but the objective significance of the internal and external for characterising the object itself. Appearance cannot exist without that which appears in it, that is without essence. "Here,

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Conspectus of Hegel's Book "Lectures on the History of Philosophy"*, Vol. 38, p. 253.
[2] Ibid., p. 152.

too, we see a transition, a flow from the one to the other: the essence appears. The appearance is essential."[1] There is nothing in essence that does not appear in some way or another. But appearance is more colourful than essence, if only for the reason that it is more individualised, involving a unique totality of external conditions. In appearance, the essential is connected with the unessential, the accidental.

Essence reveals itself both in the mass of phenomena and in the individual, essential phenomenon. In some phenomena essence shows itself completely and "transparently", while in others it is veiled. Lenin chose the turbulent flow of a river to illustrate the interrelationship of essence and appearance: "...The unessential, seeming, superficial, vanishes more often, does not hold so 'tightly', does not 'sit so firmly' as 'Essence'. Etwa: the movement of a river—the foam above and the deep currents below. *But even the foam* is an expression of essence! "[2]

Essence and appearance are related categories. They are characterised through one another. Whereas essence is something general, appearance is individual, expressing only an element of essence; whereas essence is something profound and intrinsic, appearance is external, yet richer and more colourful; whereas essence is something stable and necessary, appearance is more transient, changeable and accidental.

The difference between the essential and the unessential is not absolute but relative. For instance, at one time it was considered that the essential property of the chemical element was its atomic weight. Later this essential property turned out to be the charge of the atomic nucleus. The property of atomic weight did not cease to be essential, however. It is still essential in the first approximation, essential on a less profound level, and is further explained on the basis of the charge of the atomic nucleus.

Essence is expressed in its many outward manifestations. At the same time essence may not only express itself but also disguise itself in these manifestations. When we are in the process of gaining sensory knowledge of a thing, phenomena sometimes seem to us to be not what they are in reality. This *seemingness* is not generated by our consciousness. It arises through our being influenced by real relationships in the objective conditions of observation. Those who thought the Sun rotated around the Earth took the seeming appearance of things for the real thing. Under capitalism the wages of the worker seem to be payment for all his work, but in reality only part

[1] Ibid., p. 253.
[2] Ibid., p. 130.

of his work is paid, while the rest is appropriated by the capitalists free of charge in the form of surplus value, which constitutes the source of their profit.

Thus to obtain a correct understanding of an event, to get to the bottom of it, we must critically test the evidence of immediate observation, and make a clear distinction between the seeming and the real, the superficial and the essential.

Knowledge of the essence of things is the fundamental task of science. Marx wrote that if essence and appearance directly coincided, all science would be superfluous. The history of science shows that knowledge of essence is impossible without considering and analysing the various forms in which it is manifest. At the same time these various forms cannot be correctly understood without penetrating to their "foundation", their essence.

Chapter VII

THE NATURE OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE

What is knowledge? What are its basic forms? By what laws do we proceed from ignorance to knowledge, from one knowledge to another, deeper knowledge? What is truth? What is its criterion? By what means or methods is truth arrived at and error overcome? These and other philosophical questions are considered by the theory of knowledge, or *epistemology*.[1]

1. Materialist Dialectics Is the Theory of Knowledge of Marxism-Leninism

The problems of the theory of knowledge arose with philosophy itself. In Greek philosophy analysis of the nature of knowledge began with Democritus, Plato, Aristotle, the Epicureans, the sceptics and the stoics. They were followed in modern times by Bacon, Descartes, Locke, Spinoza, Leibnitz, Kant, Diderot, Helvétius, Hegel, Feuerbach, Herzen, Chernyshevsky and other thinkers, who made an important contribution in this field.

The problem of knowledge occupies a central place in Marxist-Leninist philosophy. Dialectical materialism reveals the lack of substance in the philosophical theories that deny (or doubt) man's ability to obtain objective knowledge of nature or social reality. Despite the differences between them these theories may be characterised in general as philosophical (epistemological) scepticism, to use the ancient Greek term, or agnosticism, a term that arose in the middle of the last century.

The ideas of philosophical scepticism were enunciated by the Greek philosophers Pyrrho, Carneades and Aenesidemus. These early sceptics reached the conclusion that truth was in principle unobtainable on the grounds that opposite, mutually exclusive opinions are expressed on every question. They argued that neither sense perceptions nor the rules of logic offered any possibility of knowing things, and that all knowledge was no more than belief or

[1] The term "epistemology" derives from two Greek words: *episteme* knowledge, and *logos*—theory, doctrine.

opinion. In modern times the arguments of the ancient sceptics were revived and developed by a number of thinkers, most notably the Scottish 18th-century philosopher David Hume, who maintained that all knowledge was, in essence, non-knowledge. "The most perfect philosophy of the natural kind only staves off our ignorance a little longer: as perhaps the most perfect philosophy of the moral or metaphysical kind serves only to discover larger portion of it. Thus the observation of human blindness and weakness is the result of all philosophy...."[1] Hume recommended faith and force of habit rather than knowledge as the basis for practical action.

Kantianism is the next variety of agnosticism. Kant produced a detailed analysis of the cognitive process, its separate elements: the senses, intellect, reason. This analysis was an important contribution to the theory of knowledge. But the direction and general conclusion of all his theoretical reasoning are incorrect. Kant revealed the complex and contradictory world of knowledge, but he divorced it from the things of the real world. "...Of what they [things—*Ed.*] are in themselves," he wrote, "we know nothing, we know only their appearances, that is, the notions they evoke in us, acting on our senses."[2]

Kant is right in saying that knowledge begins with experience, with sensation. But experience, as he understands it, instead of bringing man into contact with the world of things in themselves, separates him from it because Kant presumes the existence in the consciousness of *a priori* knowledge, i.e., forms of sensation and intellect that exist prior to and independently of experience. According to Kant, knowledge is built up out of that which is given by experience and out of these *a priori* forms. Apriorism brings him to an inescapable agnosticism.

Agnosticism does not disappear when we come to the philosophy of the 19th and 20th centuries. It was accepted by various schools of bourgeois philosophy, particularly the positivists and such varieties of positivism as Machism and the related philosophy of pragmatism. Recent bourgeois philosophy has contributed nothing original to the premises of agnosticism; it merely reproduces Kant or Hume, and more often than not presents a mixture of the two as the latest thing in philosophy.

How does agnosticism treat the basic trends in philosophy—materialism and idealism? It would be an oversimplification to assume that all idealist philosophers are agnostics. Descartes,

[1] David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding,* Felix Meiner, Leipzig, 1913, p. 29.

[2] I. Kant, *Prolegomena zu einer jeden künftigen Metaphysik, die als Wissenschaft wird auftreten können,* Felix Meiner, Leipzig, 1913, S. 43.

Leibnitz, Hegel and others were not. Hegel, as Engels observes, overthrew agnosticism "...in so far as this was possible from an idealist standpoint".[1] But the idealist criticises agnosticism inconsistently, makes concessions to it in a number of fundamental questions. On the other hand not every agnostic is a determined, consistent advocate of idealism. Often he tries to occupy a compromise position in the struggle between materialism and idealism. "For the materialist," writes Lenin, "the 'factually given' is the outer world, the image of which is our sensations. For the idealist the 'factually given' is sensation, and the outer world is declared to be a 'complex of sensations'. For the agnostic the 'immediately given' is also sensation, but the agnostic *does not go on* either to the materialist recognition of the reality of the outer world, or to the idealist recognition of the world as our sensation."[2]

Agnosticism, as a theoretical conception of knowledge which divorces the content of our sensations, perceptions and concepts from objective reality, i.e., rejects the objective content of those sensations, is idealism when it comes to solving the second aspect of the basic question of philosophy. Admittedly, not everyone who calls himself an agnostic actually is an idealist. Some naturalists, such as the Englishman Thomas Huxley, who in the 19th century introduced the term "agnosticism", declared themselves agnostics thus disguising their natural scientific materialism, their belief that theological arguments were untenable.

The attitude of agnosticism to dialectics and metaphysics is equally contradictory. Agnosticism interpreted the dialectical contradictions of human knowledge subjectively. It is true that an element of scepticism is essential to the process of cognition. Since the days of the Greeks scepticism has contained a certain dialectical element. The sceptics often perceived the richness, complexity and contradictoriness of the progress of knowledge towards truth. But agnosticism absolutises the mobility and relativity of knowledge and its scepticism acquires a negative bias. The agnostics are content to assert the relativity of knowledge, its contradictoriness, and refuse to proceed any further towards the laws of the objective world. The separation of subjective dialectics (motion of knowledge) from objective dialectics (motion of matter) is the basic epistemological source of agnosticism.

Agnosticism was rightly criticised as soon as it appeared. Its opponents were quick to point out the contradictory nature of its

[1] F. Engels, "Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy", in: K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 347.
[2] V. I. Lenin, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, Vol. 14, pp. 111-12.

statements and the absurdity of its ultimate conclusions. But in this criticism there was often more wit than solid argument. The agnostic concept of knowledge arises as a reflection of the contradictory nature of the process of acquiring knowledge, the difficulties involved in defining the criteria of true knowledge. But agnosticism also reflects the position of certain classes of society, their world view. To overcome agnosticism we have therefore to solve the complex of the problems of the theory of knowledge and to overcome, to expose and eradicate the agnosticism's social roots. Neither the old contemplative materialism nor idealist dialectics can cope with this problem. It can be solved only on the basis of materialist dialectics, which is also the theory of knowledge of Marxism-Leninism.

The basic assumptions of the dialectical-materialist theory of knowledge were formulated by Lenin in his book *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* as follows:

"(1) Things exist independently of our consciousness, independently of our sensations, outside of us....

"(2) There is definitely no difference in principle between the phenomenon and the thing-in-itself, and there cannot be any such difference. The only difference is between what is known and what is not yet known....

"(3) In the theory of knowledge, as in every other sphere of science, we must think dialectically, that is, we must not regard our knowledge as ready-made and unalterable, but must determine how *knowledge* emerges from *ignorance*, how incomplete, inexact knowledge becomes more complete and more exact."[1]

The theory of knowledge owes to Marxism two things that have changed it fundamentally: (1) the extension of materialist dialectics to the sphere of knowledge; (2) introduction into the theory of knowledge of *practice* as the basis and criteria of true knowledge. Materialist dialectics has put an end to the isolation and separation of the laws of thought from the laws of the objective world, because it is the science of the most general laws of motion both of the external world and of human thought. There are, as Engels writes, "...two sets of laws which are identical in substance, but differ in their expression in so far as the human mind can apply them consciously, while in nature and also up to now for the most part in human history, these laws assert themselves unconsciously...".[2]

[1] Ibid., p. 103.

[2] F. Engels, "Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy", p. 362.

The subjective dialectics of cognition is thus the reflection in the process of cognition of the objective reality of the objective laws intrinsically inherent in dialectics. The basis of this cognitive process is social practice.

2. Subject and Object

Knowledge does not exist in a person's brain as something primordial, it is acquired in the course of his life and is a result of cognition. *The process of man's acquisition of new knowledge is called cognition.*

In order to understand the essence, the laws of cognition one must decide who is its subject, that is, who is the knower. This would seem to be no great problem; naturally the subject of cognition is man. But, in the first place, the history of philosophy tells us that there have been thinkers who believe that it is fundamentally impossible for man to know the essence of things, and thus rule the subject of *knowledge* out of existence. And secondly, some thinkers and natural scientists assert that cognition and, in particular, theoretical thinking can be done not only by people but by the machines they build, such as computers. And finally, it is not enough merely to assert that man is the subject of cognition: one must find out *what* makes him the subject.

Ludwig Feuerbach criticised the idealist notion that the subject of cognition is consciousness or self-consciousness, correctly noting that consciousness is inherent in man alone. For Feuerbach man was a corporeal being, living in space and time and possessing by virtue of his link with nature the ability to know reality. It would seem that in his concept of cognition Feuerbach had in mind an essentially natural concrete human being. However, it turns out that in Feuerbach's theory man is only a natural and not a historically developing, social being. As Marx and Engels observe, Feuerbach "never arrives at the actually existing, active men, but stops at the abstraction 'man', and gets no further than recognising 'the actual, individual, corporeal man' emotionally...".[1]

How does man acquire his concrete, real essence? Man possesses the inherent properties of a natural being including sensory perception, but he creates his second, social nature – culture, civilisation. By means of labour he creates himself, not simply assimilating the objects of nature, but changing them in accordance with his needs. Man can do this only because he is a social being, in definite rela-

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology*, Vol. 5, p. 41.

tions with his own kind. "...Man," wrote Marx, "is no abstract being encamped outside the world. Man is *the world of man*, the state, society."[1] Outside society there is no man, and consequently, no subject of cognition either.

But the reader is quite entitled to ask, surely it is not all mankind, society as a whole, that gets to know things, but separate individuals. Of course, society cannot exist without individuals, who think, produce, possess their own features and abilities. But these individuals can be the subjects of cognition only thanks to the fact that they enter into certain social relations with one another and acquire the instruments and means of production accessible to them at a given level of social organisation.

Thus, the process of cognition is determined by the historically conditioned structure of man's cognitive abilities, the level of development of cognition, which in turn is determined by the existing social conditions. By asserting that consciousness, reason does not depend on actual individuals organised in society objective idealism made a mystery of the specific feature of cognition that it is a social process. Taking the overall result of human activity enshrined in forms of consciousness, idealism presented it as an independent essence moving according to its own logic.

The process of cognition, however, needs not only a subject, but also an object with which the subject (man) can interact. Man himself, the subject of cognition, can be judged by what becomes the object of his cognition and practice. For example, in the time of Democritus and Aristotle, and even in the time of Galileo and Newton, the electron, although it existed in reality, did not come within the range of human knowledge. Man was not capable of discovering it and making it the object of his thoughts and actions. Only by knowing the level of development of society can we infer what object of nature will become an object of human cognition. For example, social practice is now at such a level that the exploration of the space surrounding our planet, and of other planets of the solar system, is gradually entering the sphere of human activity.

Man is forever bringing new phenomena of nature into the orbit of his being, turning them into the objects of his activity. In this way the human world is made wider and deeper. Criticising Feuerbach's concept of reality, Marx and Engels write: "He does not see that the sensuous world around him is not a thing given direct from all eternity, remaining ever the same, but the product of industry and of the state of society.... The cherry-tree, like almost all fruit-

[1] K. Marx, *Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law*, Vol. 3, p. 175.

trees, was, as is well known, only a few centuries ago transplanted by *commerce* into our zone, and therefore only *by* this action of a definite society in a definite age has it become 'sensuous certainty' for Feuerbach."[1]

Thus, a considerable number of the objects of cognition are phenomena of nature transformed by human beings. These objects of cognition are to a certain degree dependent on human practical activity. This activity creates culture, an element of which is knowledge.

3. Practice. The Social and Historical Nature of Knowledge

An indispensable condition on which knowledge depends is the influence that the objects of nature and social processes exert upon man, but this process is based on the impact that man himself makes on objective reality. Knowledge develops through people's intervening in objective phenomena and transforming them. We can understand the essence of human cognition only by deducing it from the peculiarities of this practical interaction of subject and object.

Mankind and nature are two qualitatively different material systems. Man is a social being and acts in an objective way. His possession of consciousness and will exerts a substantial influence on his interaction with nature, but this interaction does not thereby lose its material essence. Man acts with all the means at his disposal, natural and artificial, on the phenomena and things of nature, transforming them and at the same time transforming himself. *This objective material activity of man is known as practice.*

The concept of practice is fundamental not only to the theory of knowledge of Marxism-Leninism, but also to Marxist-Leninist philosophy as a whole. Social production is the most important form of human practical activity, but practice cannot be confined entirely to the sphere of production. If it is, man becomes merely an economic being, satisfying by means of labour his needs for food, clothing, habitation and so on, and his consciousness becomes purely technical in character. Practice, in the broadest sense, comprises all the objective forms of man's activity; it embraces all aspects of his social being, in the process of which his material and spiritual culture is created, including such social phenomena as the class struggle, and the development of art and science.

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology*, Vol. 5, p. 39.

In his production, labour activity man treats nature not as an animal does, obtaining only what it and its offspring immediately require; man is a universal being, he creates things that do not exist in nature, he creates on his own scale and by his own yardstick according to emerging and developing aims.

All forms of man's objective activity are built on the foundation of labour and production, and it is these forms that engender such a phenomenon as knowledge of things, processes, and the laws of objective reality. Initially, knowledge was not separated from material production: the one was part of the other. As civilisation developed, however, the production of ideas broke away from the production of things, and the process of cognition became a relatively independent, intellectual activity. This subsequently gave rise to the opposition between theory and practice, the contradictions between them, which Marxist-Leninist philosophy shows us how to resolve.

In analysing the interrelation between theoretical activity and practice, we shall see the dependence of theory on practice and at the same time its relative independence. *The dependence of knowledge on practice explains to us the social and historical nature of knowledge.* All aspects of cognition are connected and determined by society. The subject of cognition is man in his social essence, the object is a natural object or social phenomenon which emerge in their ideal form thanks to cognition or people's practical material activity.

From nature man has inherited certain biological factors on which the functioning of consciousness depends; these are the brain and a fairly well developed nervous system. But man's natural organs have changed their purpose and function in the process of social development. "Thus the hand," wrote Engels, "is not only the organ of labour, *it is also the product of labour.*"[1] It is thanks to social activity that the sensory organs, the brain and hands, have acquired the ability to create such marvels as the pictures and statues of the great artists, the compositions of brilliant musicians, the masterpieces of literature, science and philosophy.

It follows from the social nature of knowledge that the development of knowledge is caused by the changes in man's objective activity, in his social needs, which determine the aim of knowledge, its target, and stimulate people to strive for an ever deeper theoretical mastery of knowledge.

The relative independence of cognition allows it to anticipate the immediate demands of practice, to foresee new phenomena and

[1] F. Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, p. 172.

actively influence production and other spheres of human life. For example, the theory of the complex structure of the atom arose before society had consciously set itself the goal of making practical use of atomic energy.

That knowledge forestalls practice is due to the development of social practice, on the one hand, and the specific laws of knowledge, on the other. The connection between knowledge and the practical tasks that the individual and mankind as a whole set themselves is often of a complex and indirect nature. For example, the results of contemporary mathematical research are mainly applied in other branches of science, such as physics and chemistry, and only afterwards in engineering and the technology of production.

Of course, there is always the possibility of theoretical activity becoming divorced from practice. In the field of cognition this may lead to its becoming a closed-circuit system without any outlet in human practice. The systematic application of knowledge to practice is, therefore, a guarantee of its objectivity, of its ever deeper penetration into the essence of the things and processes of objective reality.

4. Knowledge as Intellectual Mastery of Reality. The Principle of Reflection

The result of the process of cognition is knowledge. The concept of knowledge is extremely complex and full of implications. Many epistemologists have concentrated on one or another aspect of knowledge and presented this aspect as expressing the whole nature of knowledge. This one-sidedness has led to the exclusion of major factors comprising the very essence of knowledge with the result that some concepts of knowledge are incomplete and even misleading.

The first definition of knowledge establishes its place in the process of social life.

In knowledge man masters an object theoretically, transfers it to the plane of the ideal. Knowledge is ideal in relation to the object outside it. It is not the knowable thing, phenomenon or property itself; it is a form of assimilation of reality, man's ability to reproduce things and processes in his thoughts, aims and desires, to operate with their images and concepts.

This means that knowledge, since it is ideal, exists not in the form of sensuously material things or their material copies, but as something opposite to the material, as a moment or aspect of the

objective interaction of subject and object, as a form of man's activity. As something ideal, knowledge is interwoven with the material, in the motion of the nervous system, in the signs created by man (words, mathematical and other symbols, etc.).

This is what gives rise to the ideas through which man intellectually masters objects and creates images of things and processes which exist or may exist.

If we say that the specific nature of knowledge lies in the grouping of ideas, we must also pose the question of their content, their relationship to objective reality. The dialectical-materialist solution to this problem was formulated by Marx in the following general terms: "...The ideal is nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind, and translated into forms of thought."[1]

The relationship between knowledge and objective reality is expressed in the concept of reflection. This concept was proposed by philosophy in ancient times. The modern materialists have developed and enriched it with new content, but in some cases gave the process of reflection a mechanistic colouring; reflection was regarded as the influence of objects on man, whose sense organs, the brain registered their imprint, their form, like wax.

Although reflection is not a concept peculiar to the Marxist-Leninist theory of knowledge alone, it has gained its place there, been rethought and acquired new content. Why is such a concept needed? When discussing the content and source of knowledge, how and in which form it is connected with objective reality, we cannot uphold the positions of materialism without understanding knowledge as a reflection of the things, properties and laws of objective reality.

Materialism in the theory of knowledge proceeds from recognition of the existence of an objective reality independent of man's consciousness, and of the knowability of that reality. Recognition of objective reality, which forms part of the content of knowledge, is directly connected with the concept of reflection. Knowledge reflects the object; this means that the subject creates forms of thought that ultimately reproduce properties and laws of the given object, that is to say, the content of knowledge is objective.

The idealist theory of knowledge shirks the concept of reflection and attempts to substitute for it such terms as "correspondence", presenting knowledge not as the image of objective reality but as a sign or symbol replacing is. Lenin firmly protested against this because "signs or symbols may quite possibly indicate imaginary objects, and everybody is familiar with instances of *such* signs or

1 K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 29.

symbols".[1] The idealists themselves, such as Ernst Cassirer, the neo-Kantian, make no secret of the reasons for their dislike of the concept of reflection. Defending the concept of knowledge as a symbol in relation to the object, he wrote: "Our sensations and ideas are symbols, and not *reflections* of objects. From an image we demand a certain *likeness* to the reflected object, but we can never be sure here of this likeness."[2]

The idea of knowledge as reflection is today opposed by the philosophers of various schools, and also by philosophising revisionists. The latter reject reflection as allegedly a concept of metaphysical materialism incompatible with Marxist philosophy, which proceeds from recognition of the activeness of the subject in the process of the practical and theoretical mastering of the object. The theory of reflection is thus presented by these philosophers as the basis of dogmatism. But the true reflection of reality rules out dogmatism.

Of course, reflection, seen as the lifeless copying of existing things and processes and considered apart from the subjective, actively creative influence of man, cannot serve as a characteristic of knowledge. Knowledge can be an instrument of transformation of the world only when it is an objective and active, practically oriented reflection of reality. Knowledge is the mastering of objectively existing reality, it has reality as its content, that is, it reflects the properties and laws of phenomena and processes existing outside it. Without such reflection subjective activity cannot be creative, cannot produce necessary things and is no more than a fruitless exercise of the will. In other words, denial of the fact that knowledge is reflection strips knowledge of its objective content.

Thus the dialectical-materialist theory of knowledge reveals the nature of knowledge, basing it on the principle of reflection; it endows the concept of reflection with new content, extending it to include people's sensuously practical, creative activity. Knowledge is the coincident reflection of reality, tested by social practice. It is a form of human activity determined by the attributes and laws of the phenomena of objective reality, that is to say a means of purposeful and creatively active reflection of an object.

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, Vol. 14, p. 234.

[2] E. Cassirer, *Substanzbegriff und Funktionsbegriff. Untersuchungen über die Grundfragen der Erkenntniskritik*, 2. Teil, Verlag von Bruno Cassirer, Berlin, 1910, S. 404.

5. Language Is the Form of Existence of Knowledge. Sign and Meaning

Knowledge is ideal as a reflection of material reality and must be distinguished from that reality. But it does not exist outside the world it reflects, it must assume a specific material form of expression. Man as an objective being acts only objectively, and his knowledge also exists in objective form. One may operate with knowledge only in so far as it takes the form of *language*, a system of sensorily perceptible objects, a system of *signs*. The idea of a thing, its image, cannot be conveyed to someone else except by means of language.

This link between knowledge and its existence in the form of language was noted by Marx and Engels: "The 'mind' is from the outset afflicted with the curse of being 'burdened' with matter, which here makes its appearance in the form of agitated layers of air, sounds, in short, of language. Language is as old as consciousness, language *is* practical, real consciousness that exists for other men as well, and only therefore does it also exist for me...."[1]

On the surface, knowledge takes the form of a system of signs denoting an object, event, action, etc. That which the sign denotes is its *meaning*. Sign and meaning are indivisible; there can be no sign without meaning and vice versa.

A distinction must be made between linguistic and non-linguistic signs, the latter including signals, markings, and so on. Knowledge exists in linguistic signs, whose meaning is contained in cognitive images of the various phenomena and processes of objective reality.[2]

There is no intrinsically necessary, organic link between the sensorily perceived object, acting as a sign, and its meaning. One and the same meaning may be attached to different objects performing the function of a sign. Moreover, artificial formations, created for a special purpose—symbols—may also act as signs.

The development of knowledge has brought into being a highly ramified system of artificial, symbolic languages (for example, the symbol language of mathematics, chemistry, and so on). These languages are closely connected with the natural languages, but are

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology*, Vol. 5, pp. 43-44.

[2] Modern formal logic makes a distinction between "meaning in extension" and "meaning in intension". The former is the class of objects denoted by a certain word, the latter its logical connotation. For example, the "meaning in extension" of the word "whale" is all the whales that ever were, are or will be; its "meaning in intension" is a mammal inhabiting the ocean, etc. Here the term "meaning" is used in the broad sense, both extensionally and intensionally.

relatively independent systems of signs. Science more and more often and effectively resorts to the use of symbols as a means of expressing the results of cognition.

Symbolism is widely used by certain philosophical schools to defend idealistic notions. Indeed, if knowledge exists in the form of systems of signs, and the role of these signs is more and more often performed in modern science by symbols, the idealists interpret this as confirmation of their concept that knowledge is a symbol and not the reflection of reality. Thus neo-positivists constantly stress the idea that the adoption of artificial language by science has entailed a loss of objectivity in knowledge. "The new physics," writes Philipp Frank, "does not teach us anything about 'matter' and 'spirit', but much about semantics. We learn that the language by which the 'man from the street' describes his daily experience is not fit to formulate the general laws of physics."[1]

Yes, of course, physics has its own language, which is unlike any natural national language, but it creates such a language not in order to move away from the processes it studies, but to investigate them more deeply and thoroughly.

Knowledge is becoming increasingly symbolical in its form of expression, and scientific theory often appears in the form of a system of symbols, but the importance of these symbols and equations is that they give a more accurate and profound reflection of objective reality. It is not the symbols themselves that are the result of knowledge, but their ideal meaning, whose content is the things, processes, properties and laws studied by the given science. It is not the symbols in Einstein's formula $E = mc^2$ that are knowledge; knowledge is the meaning of the symbols that comprise this formula, and the relationship between them expresses one of the laws of physics—the connection between energy and mass; that is, it provides real knowledge.

Admittedly, it is not always easy to decide the meaning, that is, the class of objects, to which certain symbols and theories as a whole refer. The time has passed when all knowledge was, in effect, self-evident and a definite sensuous image or object could be perceived in every concept. It is no accident therefore that we are now urgently confronted with the *problem of interpretation*, the elucidation of the theories expressed by a more or less formalised symbolic language.

The very term "interpretation" has acquired a non-traditional

[1] Ph. Frank, "Present Role of Science", in: *Atti del XII Congresso Internazionale di Filosofia (Venezia, 12-18 Settembre 1958)*, Vol. I, Firenze, 1958, p. 8.

meaning. It now signifies not only scientific explanation, implying a search for the laws and causes of phenomena (science has never relinquished that task and it is still the most important element of scientific research), but also the logical operation of defining the cognitive significance of abstract, symbolic systems in different fields of knowledge and establishing the possible empirical content and sphere of application both of the individual terms (symbols) and statements (expressions) of theory, and of theory itself as a whole.

The logical thinking of the 20th century has been much concerned with questions involving the interpretation of abstract theoretical systems. At first glance this would not seem to be an intricate task. We have a certain scientific theory with its own specific language; in order to understand the theory we must reduce its language to another language, a more universal and formalised one, for example, the kind of language provided by modern formal logic. In general such a comparison of two languages is extremely fruitful because it allows us to test a scientific theory by rigorous linguistic criteria, to establish its non-contradictoriness, the accuracy of the terms used, and so on. But this method cannot be used to elucidate the *objective sphere* of theory, that is, its cognitive significance and objective content.

There is another means of interpreting scientific theory; this is to compare its language with the language of observation, of experiment, to seek not only the abstract objects behind the terms and expressions of theory, but also the empirical, sensuous objects that can actually be observed. This operation, known as *empirical interpretation*, allows us to relate an abstract theoretical system to the phenomena of objective reality; but even empirical interpretation does not solve the crucial problem, the elucidation of *the whole cognitive significance* of the theoretical system. One and the same theory may be interpreted through different experiments which, even taken together, cannot replace the knowledge it contains of the laws of phenomena.

Some schools of contemporary philosophy, notably logical positivism, assume that knowledge is built up of two elements—the rules of operating with linguistic signs and the total evidence of sense perception. Therefore, say the neo-positivists, scientific theory can be interpreted only by the linguistic means of formal logic or by reduction to the language of observation, of experiment, which is nearer to the natural language and consequently to our sensory images. The untenability of these neo-positivist concepts lies in the fact that, in analysing the language of science, they ignore the content of knowledge, whereas Kant, even in his day, convincingly

showed that knowledge is independent of the form it is given by the process of cognition. This implies that to understand theory and grasp its cognitive significance, to understand the knowledge of objective reality it contains, we must not confine ourselves to interpreting it by means of the language of formal logic and empirical observation, but include it in the general process of development of knowledge and of human civilisation in general.

By this means we can understand the part played by theory in intellectual development, in the intellectual mastery of the phenomena and processes of objective reality, and where it is leading human thought and activity. In this revealing of the cognitive significance of theory a tremendous part is played by the *categories* of philosophy.

From the above the conclusion may be drawn that *knowledge is the spiritual assimilation of reality essential to practical activity. Theories and concepts are created in the process of this assimilation, which has creative aims, actively reflects the phenomena, properties and laws of the objective world and has real existence in the form of a linguistic system.*

6. Objective Truth

For practical activity we need knowledge that reflects with the greatest degree of fullness and accuracy the objective world as it exists in itself, independently of man's consciousness and activity. Here we are confronted with the question of the truth of knowledge. What is truth? How is it possible? Where are the criteria by which we can separate true knowledge from the untrue, the false?

Long-standing tradition that goes back to the philosophy of ancient times tells us that the truth is what corresponds to reality. But this definition is so broad that it has often been accepted even by mutually exclusive philosophical schools, both materialist and idealist. Even the agnostics agree with it, while putting their own interpretation on the terms "correspondence" and "reality". The agnostics say they are not against knowledge in general, but against knowledge as the reflection of things and processes as they exist in themselves. So the general conclusion is that all philosophers have believed the attainment of truth to be the aim of knowledge and have recognised its existence.

For these reasons the Marxist-Leninist philosophy, which differs qualitatively from all preceding philosophical theories (including some progressive theories) cannot rest content with such an abstract definition of truth; it has to go further. Marxism-Leninism has

developed the more concrete concept of *objective truth*, which means knowledge whose content does not depend on a subject, does not depend either on the individual or on mankind as a whole.[1]

As we have noted, there can be no knowledge, and consequently no truth, independent of man's practical activity. This is where the objective idealists are wrong in their conception of taking truth beyond the sphere of man and mankind into some transcendental world.

But on the other hand truth is only truth inasmuch as it possesses objectivity, a content that accurately reflects objective reality. Thus, such statements as "the electron forms part of the structure of the atom of any element", or "any capitalist society is based on the exploitation of one class by another", are objective truths because their content is taken from objective reality, from the state of things that exists independently of the consciousness of the people who seek to know it.

Objective truth expresses the dialectics of subject and object. On the one hand, the truth is subjective because it is a form of human activity; on the other, it is objective because its content does not depend either on the individual or on mankind as a whole.

Denial of objective truth takes various forms. By refusing to accept the existence of a reality independent of consciousness subjective idealism also denies the objective content of human knowledge, objective truth. Pragmatism deduces truth from practice, understood as subjective activity designed to achieve utility. Bertrand Russell, a prominent figure in British neo-positivism, believed truth to be a form of faith. "...It is in fact primarily beliefs that are true or false; sentences only become so through the fact that they can express beliefs."[2] Russell sees truth as a belief to which a certain fact corresponds; the false is also a belief, but one that is not confirmed by fact. The question of what constitutes a fact that confirms belief is left open; it may be some external association, and so on. In other words, the objectivity of the content of knowledge as the decisive moment of truth does not figure in this theory.

Objective truth is not something static. It is a process that includes various qualitative states. Dialectical materialism draws a distinction between *absolute* and *relative truth*.

The term "absolute truth" is used in philosophical literature in various senses. It often implies the notion of complete and ultimate

[1] See V. I. Lenin, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, Vol. 14, pp. 122-23.
[2] Bertrand Russell, *Human Knowledge. Its Scope and Limits*, p. 112.

knowledge of the world as a whole. This is truth in the last instance, the ultimate realisation of the strivings and potential of human reason. But is such knowledge attainable? In principle man is capable of knowing everything in the world, but in reality this ability is realised in the process of the practically infinite historical development of society. "The sovereignty of thought," writes Engels, "is realised in a series of extremely unsovereignly-thinking human beings...."[1] Each result of human knowledge is sovereign (unconditionally true), inasmuch as it is a moment in the process of cognition of objective reality, and unsovereign as a separate act, inasmuch as it has its limits which are determined by the level of development of human civilisation. Therefore the desire to achieve truth in the last instance at all costs is like going on a wild goose chase.

Sometimes the term "truth in the last instance" is used to describe factual knowledge of individual phenomena and processes the authenticity of which has been proved by science. Such truths are also sometimes called *eternal*: "Leo Tolstoy was born in 1828", "birds have beaks", "chemical elements have atomic weight".

Do such truths exist? Of course, they do. But anyone who would limit cognition to the achievement of such knowledge would, as Engels remarks, not get very far. "If mankind," he writes, "ever reached the stage at which it should work only with eternal truths, with results of thought which possess sovereign validity and an unconditional claim to truth, it would then have reached the point where the infinity of the intellectual world both in its actuality and in its potentiality had been exhausted, and thus the famous miracle of the counted uncountable would have been performed."[2]

Science has developed through overthrowing various assertions that claimed to be absolute but turned out to be true only for their time (for example, "the atom is indivisible", "all swans are white", and so on). Actual scientific theory quite often contains an element of the untrue, the illusory, which is revealed by the subsequent course of cognition and the development of practice.

But do we not then set foot on the perilous path of denying objective truth? It in the process of cognition a moment of illusion is discovered in what was thought to be true, if the opposition between the true and the false is relative, then perhaps there is no general difference between them? This, in fact, is the argument of the relativists, who absolutise the relativity of knowledge. By eliminating the opposition between truth and error they come to

[1] F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p. 109.
[2] Ibid.

the conclusion that truth turns ultimately into error and that the history of science is thus merely the replacement of one error by another.

Relativism is correct in one respect—its recognition of the fluidity, the mobility of all that exists including knowledge, but it metaphysically divorces the development of knowledge from objective reality. "The materialist dialectics of Marx and Engels certainly does contain relativism but is not reducible to relativism that is, it recognises the relativity of all our knowledge, not in the sense of denying objective truth, but in the sense that the limits of approximation of our knowledge to this truth are historically conditional."[1]

The Marxist theory of knowledge, while opposing both dogmatism and relativism acknowledges the existence of both absolute and relative truths, but in doing so it establishes their interconnection in the process of achieving objective truth. "To be a materialist," Lenin writes, "is to acknowledge objective truth, which is revealed to us by our sense-organs. To acknowledge objective truth, i.e., truth not dependent upon man and mankind, is, in one way or another, to recognise absolute truth."[2]

Absolute truth exists because in our objectively true knowledge there is something that is not overthrown by the subsequent course of science, but is only enriched with new objective content. At the same time at any given moment our knowledge is *relative*; it reflects reality truly in the main, but *not completely*, and only within certain limits, and with the further movement of knowledge it becomes more accurate and more profound.

Objective truth is the process of movement of knowledge from one stage to another, as a result of which knowledge is filled out with content taken from objective reality. It is always a unity of the absolute and the relative. "Each step in the development of science," Lenin writes, "adds new grains to the sum of absolute truth, but the limits of the truth of each scientific proposition are relative, now expanding, now shrinking with the growth of knowledge."[3]

In ancient Greece a geometry was developed that is known in science as Euclidean geometry. Is it true or not? We may define it as an objective, absolute-relative truth, because its content is drawn from the spatial relationships existing in objective reality. But it is true only up to a certain point, that is, while it remains abstracted from the curvature of space (regarded in Euclidean geometry as

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, Vol. 14, p. 137.
[2] Ibid., p. 133.
[3] Ibid., p. 135.

zero). As soon as space is considered with a positive or negative curvature, scientists have recourse to non-Euclidean geometries (Lobachevsky's or Riemann's), which have extended the limits of our knowledge and contributed to the development of geometrical knowledge—along the path that leads us ever deeper into objective truth.

7. Criterion of True Knowledge

In seeking objective truth, people experience a need for a criterion to help them distinguish it from error.

This would appear to be quite simple. Science yields objective truth and people have worked out many ways of proving and testing it. But this is not the whole story. Proof in the strict sense of the term is the deduction of one knowledge from another, when one knowledge must necessarily follow from another—thesis from arguments. Thus in the process of proof knowledge does not go beyond its own sphere, but remains, as it were, confined within itself. This is what has given rise to the idea of the existence of a *formal* criterion of truth, when truth is established by collating one set of knowledge with another.

The so-called theory of *coherence*, which has been much publicised in the 20th century by the neo-positivists, proceeds in general from the proposition that no other criterion exists, and that truth itself is the agreement of one set of knowledge with another set of knowledge established on the basis of the formal logical law of inadmissibility of contradiction. But formal logic can guarantee us the truth of a deduced statement only if the premises from which it follows are true; A follows from B, B follows from C, and so on *ad infinitum*.

But from where, we may ask, do we obtain the general principles, the axioms and even the rules of logical deduction that form the basis of any proof? This question was asked by Aristotle. If we follow the theory of coherence, we can only accept them as conventional agreements (*conventions*) and thus write off all attempts to establish the objective truth of knowledge, thereby submitting to subjectivism and agnosticism in the theory of knowledge.

The history of philosophy records various approaches to the problem of the criterion of true knowledge. Some philosophers saw the solution in empirical observation, in the sensations and perceptions of the individual. Of course, empirical observation is one of the means of testing knowledge. But in the first place, not all theoretical concepts may be tested by direct observation. Secondly, as

Engels wrote, "the empiricism of observation alone can never adequately prove necessity.... This is so very correct that it does not follow from the continual rising of the sun in the morning that it will rise again tomorrow...."[1] But knowledge that lays down laws must contain in itself both necessity and universality.

Of course, scientific practice does sometimes test statements and theories by sensory experience. But this cannot serve as the ultimate criterion of truth, because from one and the same theory there may follow quite different consequences that can be tested experimentally. The fact that one such consequence, or several of them taken together, correspond to experience still does not guarantee the objective truth of the whole theory. Besides, not all propositions of science can be tested by direct recourse to sensory experience. This is why even the neo-positivists, who champion the principle of *verification* (testing of knowledge by comparing it with the data of experience, observation and experiment), have felt its unreliability as a general criterion of the truth of knowledge, particularly when dealing with scientific theories that possess a large degree of universality. To rescue the principle of verification, they go on inventing ever wider interpretations of the concept of "experimental verifiability", on the one hand, while limiting the sphere of its application (not all true ideas can be tested experimentally, etc.), on the other. Some of them have proposed that verifiability should be replaced by falsifiability, that is, the attempt to find experimental data that refute rather than confirm the theory.

Disproving facts are, of course, essential to science, particularly as a means of establishing the limits of applicability of a given theoretical system. But this method cannot be used to prove its objective truth.

If empirical observation is not a criterion, then, perhaps, general principles, axioms, the rules of logical deduction, etc. may be regarded as true simply because they are clear and obvious, that is to say, their truth is self-evident and requires no proof, since the opposite would be simply unthinkable. But modern science is essentially critical and cannot rely either on faith or self-evidence, and paradox is common in its statements.

Marxism has solved the problem of the criterion of truth by showing that it lies ultimately in the *activity* which is the basis of knowledge, that is, *in social historical practice*. "The question whether objective truth can be attributed to human thinking is not a question of theory but is a *practical* question. Man must prove the truth, i.e., the reality and power, the this-worldliness of his thinking

[1] F. Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, p. 229.

in practice."[1]

What gives practice its strength as a criterion of truth? The criterion of true knowledge must possess two qualities. First, it must undoubtedly be sensuous and material in character, it must take man out of the field of consciousness into the world of objects, because it is the objectivity of knowledge that must be established. Second, knowledge, particularly the laws of science, has a universal character, and the universal and infinite cannot be proved by one individual fact or even by any number of them taken together. Man's practical activity, the nature of which is intrinsically universal, possesses this special feature.

As Lenin said, a person "definitely" grasps objective truth, "...only when the notion becomes 'being-for-itself' in the sense of practice."[2] Moreover, in practice the universal acquires the sensuously concrete form of a thing, a process, and so it has in itself "not only the dignity of universality, but also of immediate actuality."[3] In other words, in practice the objectivity of knowledge which is universal in character acquires the form of sensuous authenticity. This does not mean, of course, that from the standpoint of Marxist-Leninist epistemology every concept, every act of knowledge must be directly tested in practice, in production or some other form of material human activity. In reality the process of proof takes the form of deducing one set of knowledge from another, that is, the form of a logical chain of reasoning, some of whose links are tested by application in practice. But does not this suggest the idea that besides practice there exists criterion based on the logical apparatus of thought, on the collation of one set of knowledge with another? Of course, the forms and laws of logical deduction do not depend on separate acts of practical activity, but this does not mean that they are in general unconnected with practice and not engendered by it. As Lenin wrote, "...the practical activity of man had to lead his consciousness to the repetition of the various logical figures thousands of millions of times *in order that* these figures *could* obtain the significance of *axioms*".[4]

Practice is not a fixed state, but a process formed of individual elements, stages and links. Knowledge may overtake the practice of one or another historical period. There may not be enough available practice to establish the truth of the theories that are advanced by science. All this indicates the relativity of the criterion of practice.

[1] K. Marx, *Theses on Feuerbach*, Vol. 5, p. 3.
[2] V. I. Lenin, *Conspectus of Hegel's Book "The Science of Logic"*, Vol. 38, p. 211.
[3] Ibid., p. 213.
[4] Ibid., p. 190.

But this criterion is simultaneously absolute because only on the basis of the practice of today or tomorrow can objective truth be established. "...The criterion of practice can never, in the nature of things, either confirm or refute any human idea *completely*. This criterion too is sufficiently 'indefinite' not to allow human knowledge to become 'absolute', but at the same time it is sufficiently definite to wage a ruthless fight on all varieties of idealism and agnosticism."[1] As it develops practice overcomes its limitations as a criterion of knowledge. Developing practice cleanses knowledge of all that is false and urges it on to the new results that we need.

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, Vol. 14, pp. 142-43.

Chapter VIII

DIALECTICS OF THE PROCESS OF COGNITION

Cognition takes place as a passing from ignorance to knowledge, from one knowledge to another, deeper knowledge, as movement towards objective, ever fuller truth with more and more facets. This process is made up of a multitude of elements and aspects that have a necessary connection with one another. As epistemology, materialist dialectics explains what is meant by cognition and reveals the interaction of its basic components, their role in the attainment of truth.

1. Cognition as Unity of the Sensory and the Rational

Philosophy long ago singled out the two elements that make up cognition. These are *the sensory* (sensations, perceptions and representations) and *the rational* (thought in its various forms: concepts, propositions, inferences, hypotheses, theories). This at once gave rise to the question: what is the significance of these elements in the origin and development of knowledge? How are they related? There have of course been many different answers to these questions.

The adherents of *sensationalism* assume that the decisive role in cognition belongs to the sensory element, to sensations and perceptions. Here we have a sound idea because it is indeed only through sensations that a person is connected with the external world. "The first premise of the theory of knowledge," Lenin wrote, "undoubtedly is that the sole source of our knowledge is sensation."[1] But the nature of man's sensations and perceptions, their role in cognition, may be understood in different ways.

Sensations are the source of knowledge; what, then, is the source of the sensations themselves?

Idealist sensationalism (Berkeley, Hume, the Machists) regards sensations and perceptions as the ultimate reality that we can know; it either repudiates the existence of reality outside cognition or

[1] Ibid., p. 126.

dismisses the question of the source of sensations and perceptions as absurd. Moreover, the idealists often try to make capital out of the actual contradictions in the sensory reflection of reality.

The "physiological" idealism that emerged in the 19th century with its narrow interpretation of physiological data about the sense organs assumes that an external stimulus only gives an impulse to sensation but in no way determines its content. The content depends on the "intrinsic energy" of every sense organ. If the problem is stated in this way sensations are virtually isolated from the external world and their content is interpreted as something subjective, which can at best perform the role of a symbol, a hieroglyph in relation to the objects of the external world, and this conclusion obviously leads to agnosticism.

At the other extreme we have the view of sensation known as "naive realism". Its adherents assume that things and processes existing outside the human mind are exactly the same as what man feels and perceives. The individual and his nervous system allegedly play no part in forming sensations.

In reality the sense organs do influence the formation of sensations. A sensation is a subjective image of the objective world. "If colour," Lenin writes, "is a sensation only depending upon the retina (as natural science compels you to admit), then light rays, falling upon the retina, produce the sensation of colour. This means that outside us, independently of us and of our minds, there exists a movement of matter, let us say of ether waves of a definite length and a definite velocity, which, acting upon the retina, produce in man the sensation of a particular colour.... This is materialism: matter acting upon our sense-organs produces sensation. Sensation depends on the brain, nerves, retina, etc., i.e., on matter organised in a definite way."[1]

As the source of human knowledge sensations and perceptions are to be trusted. Within certain limits they give us notions of the external world that correctly reflect reality. This coordination between sense data and the external world is the result of the evolution of living beings, their adaptation to the environment.

But although sense data provide the source of knowledge, they are not its whole content. The thesis of sensationalism proclaimed by John Locke (there is nothing in the reason that was not originally in the senses), expressed the metaphysical narrowness that bears the name of *empiricism* (from the Greek *empeiria*—experience). From the standpoint of empiricism knowledge not only takes its source from sensations and perceptions; it never goes beyond them.

[1] Ibid., p. 55.

To thought empiricism grants only the role of summing up, arranging the data of experience, which is understood as the totality of man's sensations and perceptions. The empiricism of the materialist philosophy of the 17th and 18th centuries was progressive inasmuch as it encouraged experimental research and helped to rid knowledge of speculative scholasticism. Subsequently, however, empiricism became one of the sources of agnosticism and various kinds of superstition because in its contempt for theoretical thought it led science to operate with obsolete concepts or, as Engels remarks, this resulted in "some of the most sober empiricists being led into the most barren of all superstitions, into modern spiritualism".[1]

Contemporary empiricism takes the form of neo-positivism or logical positivism. Although not opposed to thought in general, it allows it only in the form of logical *calculi* (logical proof, operations with signs). The neo-positivists try to find and single out in modern science certain initial elements (statements and terms) which can be related to immediate sense data. These data are taken as the basis of knowledge, all other knowledge being reduced either to this basis or to logical rules of deduction, which are *conventional,* i.e., a matter of agreement between scientists. The whole course of the development of science has convincingly demonstrated, however, that knowledge cannot be reduced to the two elements of experimental data and logical operations with signs. It embraces the whole complex, synthesising activity of human reason.

Whereas the empiricists exaggerate the role of sensory reflection, the representatives of another school known as *rationalism* absolutise the role of thought in cognition. In opposition to the sensory contemplation of the empiricists the rationalists (Descartes, Spinoza and others) advocated "supersensory", allegedly independent of sense data, "pure thought" able to deduce new knowledge logically, unsupported by experience. They advanced the concept of *intellectual intuition* by means of which the reason, by-passing the data of the senses, could gain direct knowledge of the essence of things and processes. This belittled the role of sensory experience. Experience henceforth only gave impetus to thought or served merely to corroborate speculative deductions. Logically developing these concepts, some rationalists (Descartes) arrived at the idea of the existence of "innate knowledge", specifically in the form of fundamental concepts of mathematics and logic. Declaring these "innate" ideas to be absolute truths, the rationalists tried to deduce from

[1] F. Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, p. 60.

them the basic content of scientific knowledge.

The *apriorism* of Kant is a somewhat toned down, diluted form of rationalism. According to Kant, knowledge springs from two independent sources: (1) the data of sensory perceptions that provide the content of knowledge and (2) the forms of sensuousness and intellect which are *a priori* (independent of experience). Kant is quite right in assuming that knowledge arises as a result of the synthesis of the sensory and the rational, but he divorces these two elements from each other; sensory perceptions are connected with the influence on the sense organs of "things-in-themselves", which are independent of the consciousness, whereas the rational forms of cognition (categories) are rooted in the *a priori* pre-experience abilities of the intellect. Thus, having correctly understood the categories (most general concepts) as forms of cognition, Kant failed to see that they are such only because they reflect the true relationships and forms of the objective world. The forms of thought do exist independently of specific, individual experience, but they have arisen and developed on the basis of the sensuously objective activity of mankind as a whole. Kant was wrong in treating them as forms that are innate in man.

The relationship between the sensory and the rational, between the data of experience and thought, can be correctly understood in cognition only from the standpoint of the Marxist theory of knowledge.

Cognition begins with the living, sensory contemplation of reality. Man's sensory experience (sensations, perceptions, representations or images) are the source of knowledge linking him with the external world. This does not mean that every individual act of knowing begins with experience. Knowledge is not inherited in the biological sense, but it is passed on from one generation to another. There are forms of knowledge that theoretically generalise the experience of previous generations and these forms are independent of "the *particular* experience of each individual".[1]

Knowledge is not only that which is provided by the sense organs. *With the help of various forms of thought it goes beyond the bounds of sensory images.* Even such a simple judgement as "the rose is red" is a form of the connection between sensation and perception on the basis of the concepts of flowers, their colouring, etc. Without concepts a person cannot express in language his sensory experience. This is why there is no such thing as "pure" sensory contemplation. In man it is always permeated with thought. Nor is there any such thing as "pure" thought, since the latter is

[1] F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p. 53.

always connected with sensory material, even if only in the form of images and signs.

Living sensory contemplation of reality may be regarded as direct only in the sense that it links us with the world of things, their properties and relationships, but it is conditioned by previous practice, by the existence of formed language, and so on. No knowledge can be acquired without previously digesting the results of sensations.

Thus knowledge is *unity of the sensory and rational reflection of reality*. Without sensory representation, images, man can have no real knowledge. Many of the concepts of modern science, for example, are extremely abstract, and yet they are not entirely free from sensory content not only because they owe their origin in the final analysis to human experience, but also because they exist in the form of a system of sensually perceptible signs. On the other hand, knowledge cannot do without the rational processing of the data of experience and their inclusion in the results and course of man's intellectual development.

2. Levels of Knowledge: Empirical and Theoretical, Abstract and Concrete. Unity of Analysis and Synthesis

The sensory and the rational are the basic elements of all knowledge. But in the process of cognition we may distinguish different levels, qualitatively unique stages of knowledge that differ in their fullness, depth and range, in the means by which their basic content is achieved, and in the form of their expression.

Here we find such levels as the *empirical* and the *theoretical*.

By the *empirical* we mean a level of knowledge whose content is basically obtained from experience (from observation and experiment) and subjected to a certain amount of rational treatment, that is, expressed in a certain language. At this level of knowledge the object of cognition is reflected in those of its properties and relationships that are accessible to sensory contemplation. For example, in modern physics even elementary particles are accessible to empirical cognition. In a cloud chamber or in a powerful accelerator particles are sensually perceived by the researcher in the form of photographs of their tracks, and so on. The results of these observations and measurements are registered in a certain language. The data of observations and experiments are the empirical basis on which theoretical knowledge is built. So much importance is attached to obtaining these data that in certain sciences a division

of labour has occurred with the result that one group of scientists may specialise in experimental research, while another engages mainly in theoretical study. It is no accident that we speak today of experimental physics, biology, physiology, psychology, etc. Experiment is being ever more widely applied in the social sciences as well.

Theoretical cognition is on a different level from the empirical. At the theoretical level the object is reflected in its connections and laws, which are discovered not only by experiment but through abstract thinking. The task of theoretical knowledge, as Marx says, is "...to resolve the visible, merely external movement into the true intrinsic movement...".[1] In theoretical knowledge the sensory provides a certain basis and form of expression (a system of signs) for the results obtained by thought.

In any field of science we encounter theories in which knowledge not only goes far beyond the bounds of sensory experience, but sometimes contradicts the sensory data. This contradiction is dialectical: it disproves neither the theoretical postulates, nor the empirical data. Take, for example, Einstein's theory of relativity, quantum mechanics, Lobachevsky's geometry and much else. Experience tells us nothing about the constant velocity of light; when Max Planck proposed that light is emitted in quanta, in packets, there was no experimental confirmation of the fact; when Lobachevsky proposed the axiom "through a point that is not on the given straight line there pass at least two straight lines that are in the same plane as the given line and do not cross it", he did not base his proposition on any visual conceptions of space; in fact, he actually contradicted those that existed.

The empirical and theoretical levels of knowledge are closely interconnected. First, theoretical constructions arise from generalisation of previous knowledge, including that which is obtained through observation and experiment. This, of course, does not imply that all theories come directly from experience; some of them take already existing concepts and theories as their point of departure. But if we take not separate theories but *theoretical knowledge* as a whole, it is of course directly or indirectly connected with empirical knowledge.

Theoretical knowledge can and should anticipate experimental data. Theoretical physics produced the idea of the existence of anti-particles long before they were experimentally detected. But it would be a mistake to assume that in this case there was nothing for observation and experiment to do but record the results of theory.

[1] K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, p. 313.

When scientists discovered the positron in cosmic rays, this was a brilliant experimental confirmation of the quantum equation invented by the British physicist Paul Dirac, which implied the existence of an electron with two opposite electrical charges, negative and positive. But empirical observations also corrected Dirac, who held that the particle symmetrical to the electron was not a positron but a proton.

Thus the development of knowledge presupposes constant interaction of experiment and theory. Absolutisation of either is disastrous to the development of science. Even so, it is theory and not experiment that is the goal of science; scientific development depends not so much on the quantity of empirical data as on the quantity and quality of the well-founded theories it produces. Present-day research in many fields of both natural and social sciences, having accumulated considerable empirical material, is experiencing a need for new fundamental theories on the basis of which it would be possible to generalise and systematise this material and move on from there.

The level of knowledge is determined not only by the means by which it is attained, experimental or theoretical, but by how the object is reflected—in all its connections and manifestations or in only one aspect, although perhaps a very important one. From this standpoint knowledge is classified as *concrete* and *abstract*.

In principle, knowledge seeks to become concrete, that is to say, many-sided, embracing the object as a whole. But this very concreteness may be of different kinds. In a person's sensory experience an object may be given in many connections and relationships. But empirical knowledge can embrace only external connections and relationships, and therefore sensory concreteness is limited in content; it does not give man an exhaustive knowledge of a phenomenon or its laws.

To rise to a higher level of concreteness one must first view the object or group of objects from one particular angle, having eliminated the others by abstraction. In this sense thinking may be regarded as a means of knowing reality through abstraction.

Abstraction is a very important means of reflecting objective reality through thought. Abstraction brings out the essential in any given relationship. Moreover, by singling out any particular property or relationship, thought can abstract itself even from the things and phenonena to which these properties and relationships belong. Thus we arrive at the qualities of "whiteness", "beauty", "heredity", "electrical conductivity", and so on. Such abstractions are known in logic as *abstract objects*.

In the process of abstraction thought does not confine itself to

singling out and isolating a certain sensually perceptible property or relationship of an object (if so, abstraction would not overcome the defects of sensory concreteness), but tries to lay bare the connection hidden from and inaccessible to empirical knowledge. Thus "immersion in abstraction" is a means of knowing the object more profoundly. "Thought proceeding from the concrete to the abstract—provided it is *correct*...—does not get away *from* the truth but comes closer to it. The abstraction of *matter*, of a *law* of nature, the abstraction of *value*, etc., in short *all* scientific (correct, serious, not absurd) abstractions reflect nature more deeply, truly and *completely*."[1] Modern science, which has made abstraction the main instrument for penetrating the essence of things and processes, confirms this fact.

But no abstraction is all-powerful. It is the means by which human thought singles out individual properties and laws in the object. By means of abstraction the object is analysed in thought and broken down into abstract definitions. The formation of these definitions is the means of attaining new concrete knowledge. This movement of thought is known as the *ascent from the abstract to the concrete*. In the process of this ascent the object is reproduced by thought in its entirety. This process was first described by Hegel. Marx interpreted it materialistically, and applied it in *Capital* to the study of bourgeois social relations. Whereas Hegel believed that the object itself is created in the process of ascent from the abstract to the concrete, Marx saw this only as the reproduction of the object in thought in all the fullness of its connections through the synthesis of various abstract (one-sided) definitions. "The concrete," he wrote, "is concrete because it is a synthesis of many definitions, thus representing the unity of diverse aspects. It appears therefore in reasoning as a summing-up, a result, and not as a starting point, although it is the real point of origin, and thus also the point of origin of perception and representation."[2]

Movement from the sensuously concrete through the abstract to the concrete in thought is a law of the development of theoretical knowledge. The concrete in thought is the most profound and meaningful knowledge. For example, in *Capital* Marx begins his analysis with an abstract definition of commodity and goes on from there to build a picture of capitalist relations in their totality.

Truth cannot be objective if it is not concrete, if it is not a developing system of knowledge, if it does not constantly enrich

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Conspectus of Hegel's Book "The Science of Logic"*, Vol. 38, p. 171.

[2] K. Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, London, 1971, p. 206.

itself with new elements expressing new aspects and connections of the object and deepening our previous scientific ideas. In this sense truth is always a theoretical system of knowledge that seeks to reflect the object as a whole.

The movement from the sensuously concrete through the abstract to the concrete in thought which takes place on the basis of practice includes such operations as *analysis* and *synthesis*. To abstract a phenomenon or object we must split it up mentally into its properties, relationships, parts, stages of development, and so on. On the other hand, the construction of the concrete in thought proceeds on the basis of synthesis, the unifying of the various properties and relationships discovered both in the given object and in other objects. For example, modern science has reduced the emission of solar energy and the thermonuclear reaction on Earth to a single principle.

This combination in thought of various phenomena, aspects and properties is itself made possible by objective laws. Thought "can bring together into a unity only those elements of consciousness in which or in whose real prototypes this unity already *existed before*."[1]

Knowledge cannot make any real step forward by only analysing or only synthesising. Analysis must precede synthesis, but analysis itself is possible only on the basis of what has been synthesised; the link between analysis and synthesis is organic and intrinsically necessary.

3. The Historical and the Logical. Forms of Reproduction of the Object by Thought

Reproducing an object in thought in all its objectivity and concreteness means cognising it in development, in history. So among all the various means of attaining knowledge two methods are outstanding: the *historical* and the *logical*.

The *historical method* involves tracing the various stages of development of objects in their chronological sequence, in the concrete forms of their historical manifestation. Let us say, for example, that we have to reproduce the development of capitalism. The historical method requires that we should begin the description of this process from its inception and development in certain countries of Europe and America with numerous details and concrete forms that express both the universal, the necessary, and the

[1] F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p. 58.

particular, the individual, and even the accidental. This method has its merits, inasmuch as it attempts to present the historical process in all its diversity, including its unique and individual features.

But to reveal the history of an object, to single out the main stages of its development and the basic historical connection, one must have a theoretical concept of this object, of its essence. The other method—the *logical method*—does in fact aim at reproducing in theoretical form, in a system of abstractions, the essence, the main content of the historical course. This kind of inquiry begins with an examination of the object in its most developed form.

The *logical method* has its merits and certain advantages over the historical. In the first place, it expresses the object in its most essential connections; secondly, it provides simultaneously an opportunity of knowing its history. "The point where this history begins," Marx wrote, "must also be the starting point of the train of thought, and its further progress will be simply the reflection, in abstract and theoretically consistent form, of the historical course. Though the reflection is corrected, it is corrected in accordance with laws provided by the actual historical course, since each factor can be examined at the stage of development where it reaches its full maturity, its classical form."[1] Thus the logical method reflects in theoretical form simultaneously both the essence of the object, the necessity and the laws and also the history of its development, because in reproducing the object in its highest, most mature form, which must include its previous stages, sublated, as it were, we thus also arrive at a knowledge of the main, the basic stages in its history.

The logical method is not merely a speculative deduction of one concept from another; it is also based on reflection of the real object, but only at the essential points of its development, and not necessarily following the temporal and perceptible connection between these points, as it appears on the surface.

The logical method has also the advantage over the historical method in that it provides the opportunity of uniting in itself two essential elements of research: study of the structure of the given object and interpretation of its history.

In *Capital* Marx proceeded on the basis of the logical method of inquiry. He does not expound the history of capitalist production relations in a systematic, chronological way; he examines the economic structure of capitalism in its mature, classic form.

[1] K. Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1977, p. 225.

However, as Lenin observes, he simultaneously gives "the history of capitalism and the analysis of the *concepts* summing it up".[1] We can see this from any concept that we care to choose as an example. In this way the logical sequence in the changing forms of value (elementary, expanded, general, money) reflects their replacement in the course of history.

The historical and logical methods of research are closely interconnected. On the basis of the unity of the historical and the logical one can, as required, make a special study either of the history of development of an object or of its contemporary structure.

The historical method of research is absolutely justified when its goal is study of the history of the object itself. Even here, however, unity of the logical and the historical, i.e., our study of the history of the object in all its diversity, with all its zigzags and accidents, should be our guiding principle leading us to an understanding of the object's logic, its laws, the basic stages of its development. Not only does logic lead to history; historical research itself proceeds from certain concepts and results in the formation of new concepts generalising history and embracing the essence of the object of inquiry.

The logical reproduction of the object in thought proceeds in certain forms. Lenin revealed the dialectics of the process of cognition when he wrote: "Knowledge is the reflection of nature by man. But this is not a simple, not an immediate, not a complete reflection, but the process of a series of abstractions, the formation and development of concepts, laws.... Here there are *actually*, objectively, *three* members: (1) nature, (2) human cognition = the human *brain* (as the highest product of this same nature), and (3) the form of reflection of nature in human cognition, and this form consists precisely of concepts, laws, categories...".[2]

The form of thought is the pattern by means of which objective reality, the object in its historical development, is reflected in a system of consistent, interconnected abstractions. Abstractions differ not because one deals with a particular object of nature or society while another deals with another such object, but because they have different functions in thought. These various patterns of thought have been shaped by the goals of man's search for knowledge, and it is thanks to them that an object may be known comprehensively, in its actual parts and as a whole.

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Plan of Hegel's Dialectics (Logic)*, Vol. 38, p. 318.
[2] V. I. Lenin, *Conspectus of Hegel's Book "The Science of Logic"*, Vol. 38, p. 182.

The basic logical forms of thought are the *proposition*, the *concept* and the *inference*.

The traditional meaning of *proposition* in logic is a thought that affirms or denies something about something: "hydrogen is a chemical element", a "commodity has value". A proposition reveals all the characteristic features of the thought in question. The process of thinking begins when we pick out certain individual attributes and properties of objects and make certain elementary abstractions. All real knowledge takes the form of propositions or systems of propositions. Even the expression of the results of living, sensory perception in rational form acquires the form of a proposition. For example: "This house is bigger than that."

Any proposition reveals the connection between the particular and the universal, between identity and difference, the accidental and the necessary, and so on. "The fact that identity contains difference within itself is expressed in *every sentence*, where the predicate is necessarily different from the subject; the *lily* is a *plant*, the *rose is red*, where, either in the subject or in the predicate, there is something that is not covered by the predicate or the subject.... That from the outset *identity with itself* requires *difference from everything else* as its complement, is self-evident."[1]

Cognition leads logically to the singling out of the *universal* and the *essential* in the object under consideration, that is, to a *concept,* which sums up this or that stage in the cognition of the object and expresses the knowledge attained in a concentrated form. "...Human concepts are not fixed," writes Lenin, "but are eternally in movement, they pass into one another, they flow into one another, otherwise they do not reflect living life. The analysis of concepts, the study of them, the 'art of operating with them' (Engels) always demands study of the *movement* of concepts, of their interconnection, of their mutual transitions...."[2]

Revealing the dialectics of the movement of concepts means discovering the laws of their development. The development of concepts proceeds in two main directions: (1) new concepts arise that reflect the objects and phenomena which have become the target of theoretical inquiry; (2) old concepts are concretised and raised to a higher level of abstraction. The rethinking, clarifying and enrichment of the basic concepts that form the *categories* of a given science are of particular inportance. Revolutions in science are accompanied by radical upheavals in its fundamental concepts, by

[1] F. Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, pp. 214-15.

[2] V. I. Lenin, *Conspectus of Hegel's Book "Lectures on the History of Philosophy"*, Vol. 38, p. 253.

changes in the content of the old concepts and emergence of new ones that change the system and method of the thought of scientists.

No concept can exist outside its definition, in the process of which it is aligned with another, wider concept. Revealing the essence of an object entails revealing the general. However, to have a concept it is not enough merely to point out what is general. So definition always involves stating to what immediate species the object belongs, i.e., a more general concept, and also indicating the *special features* of the species in question. For example, the concept of "stars" may be defined as follows: "Stars are natural celestial bodies that emit light."

There can be no concepts or even any thought processes as such without *inferences.* Inferences are the means by which we obtain new knowledge on the basis of previously established knowledge without resorting to the experience of the senses. *Inference is the process by which we deduce certain propositions* (conclusions) *from other judgements* (premises); it is thus a *system of propositions.* Inference expresses the ability of theoretical thought to go beyond the bounds of what is given by direct sensory experience, observations and experiments. If man were unable to acquire new knowledge through inference, he would, for example, never have been able to calculate the distance from Earth to other celestial bodies; he could not tell what the stars are made of or penetrate into the world of the atom and the elementary particles of which it consists. A conclusion is drawn from certain premises, but it does not merely repeat them; it produces something new, something that enriches knowledge.

Proposition, concept and inference are interconnected; if one changes, the other must change also. This interdependence shows itself in the process of thought, which includes: (1) definition of the properties of the object (proposition), (2) summing up of previous knowledge, formation of scientific concepts, (3) transition from one, previously attained set of knowledge to another (inference).

All these elements exist in scientific *theory*, which is a relatively self-contained and yet sufficiently broad *system of knowledge* describing and explaining a certain group of phenomena. Propositions form the principles and statements of theory, concepts are its terms, and the various inferences are the means of obtaining knowledge through deduction.

The function of theory is not only to systematise the results obtained by cognition, but to point the way ahead to new knowledge.

Theories in science may be of different kinds depending on the

object which they reflect, on how wide the range of phenomena they describe, and on the means of proof that they use. An unusual form of theory is the so-called *metatheory*, that is, theory about theory.

The emergence of metatheories and metasciences is something new and characteristic of the development of knowledge in the 20th century; it is evidence of an interest in the structure, the ways of building theory and its development. The process of integration of theories, the creation of so-called *unifying theories*, is also characteristic of the present day. The combination of theories that have been evolved at different times to explain different things into a single new theory with different principles, is proof of the movement of knowledge along the path of objective truth. Even theories created by different sciences are now being combined. The solution of the problems connected with metatheories, with the combination and integration of theories, demands further intensive elaboration of logic.

4. Dialectics and Formal Logic

Logic studies the forms of thought. It is traditionally supposed to have been founded by Aristotle, who first collated and systematised the problems that later became known as the problems of logic. In modern times a great contribution to the development of logic was made by Francis Bacon and other philosophers. By the 17th and 18th centuries a branch of philosophy had taken shape known as *traditional* or *classical formal logic*. Its laws included the laws of identity, non-contradiction, the excluded middle and sufficient proof, and it regarded the forms of thought as the principles of being itself.

Formal logic was futher developed on the one hand by new means of logical analysis and, on the other, by the study of new forms of proof suggested by the development of scientific knowledge. Various systems of mathematical symbols were evolved for solving logical problems; the use of formal logic in mathematics, particularly for purposes of proof, led to a development of formal logic itself. This was how the variety of formal logic, known as *symbolic or mathematical logic*, arose. Today this form of logic is used primarily to analyse synthetic, formalised languages; it studies their syntax and semantics. Logical syntax formulates the rules of the construction and transformation of linguistic expressions only from the formal standpoint, without taking into consideration their content; logical semantics analyses linguistic systems in order to discover the meaning of their elements.

The formal logical analysis of theoretical knowledge has produced great results. Cybernetics, for example, would be impossible without the method of analysing knowledge on the basis of synthetic, formalised languages. This method allows us to analyse existing knowledge, suitably rearrange it, express it in a system that is as strictly formalised as possible and transfer certain functions of human thought to a machine. Analysis of knowledge by means of formal logic leads to the production of new knowledge by helping to identify certain missing elements and links that are needed for the construction of a strictly formalised theory and indicating where they are likely to be found.

Logic developed not only through separating formal logic as an independent science, which later evolved into symbolic logic with a specific subject-matter and method of study. The study of the forms and methods of theoretical thought leading to objective truth also developed within the framework of philosophy. Continuing this line of development, materialist dialectics has emerged both as a theory of knowledge and as *dialectical logic*. Dialectical logic arose as a continuation and development of previous logical theories. It does not deny the importance of formal logic, but seeks to define its true place in the study of scientific knowledge.

Dialectical logic does not exist and cannot exist outside materialist dialectics, because it reveals the significance of the most general laws of development of the objective world for the movement of thought towards truth. It thus investigates the extent to which the content of knowledge coincides with the object of inquiry, the extent to which knowledge approaches truth. Differing in quality from formal logic, dialectical logic does not consider the forms of thought only from the standpoint of their structure; it is also interested in their concrete content. It considers them not in a rigid, isolated form, but in their interconnection, in motion and development. Whereas formal logic concentrates mainly on the analysis of established theories, dialectical logic reveals the logical principles of transition to new knowledge and studies the formation and development of theories.

Lenin formulated the basic demands of dialectical logic as follows: (1) examination of all facets of the object, (2) examination of the object in its "development ... in 'self-movement' .... Thirdly, a full 'definition' of an object must include the whole of human experience.... Fourthly, dialectical logic holds that 'truth is always concrete, never abstract'...."[1]

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Once Again on the Trade Unions, the Current Situation and the Mistakes of Trotsky and Bukharin*, Vol. 32, p. 94.

5. The Formation and Development of Scientific Theory. Intuition

Materialist dialectics studies the movement of scientific knowledge, singling out its forms and laws, the fundamental concepts and principles by which thought arrives at objective truth. The fundamental concepts and principles in science are the result of people's creative activity. But what is scientific creativity? Does the scientist's creative activity follow any particular laws or is it absolutely free and untrammelled by any of the demands of logic? Of course, creativity, as we have seen, is influenced by a large number of factors that do not fall within the scope of logic, but at bottom it still represents the activity of human reason, that is, it is rational and consequently the object of logical analysis.

Scientific research begins by stating a *problem*. The notion of "problem" usually implies an unknown quantity and the term may be preliminarily defined as that which is not known to man and that should be known. This rather incomplete definition contains an important factor—the *factor of obligation*, i.e., that which gives direction to inquiry.

However, it will readily be appreciated that the distance between the unknown and the obligation to know is rather considerable. There is much that a man does not know and, in principle at least, nothing that he would not like to know. So he must decide what he does not know but is capable of knowing at the given stage of his development. This in itself requires a certain amount of knowledge, and so a problem—paradoxical though it may sound—is concerned not merely with the unknown, but with knowing what is unknown.

Problems emerge from the needs of man's practical activity, in the form of a certain desire for new knowledge. Science has to reach definite level of development to acquire the necessary and sufficient grounds for posing a certain problem. For example, man's bold dream of lighting thousands of new suns for the benefit of the human race has only now become a scientific problem, the problem of controlled termonuclear reaction.

To state a problem we must have some preliminary, even if incomplete knowledge of how it is to be solved. The correct statement of the problem, the definition of the real need for new knowledge that can be satisfied in the given circumstances, takes us a good half of the way toward attaining new knowledge.

But both in stating a problem and, even more so, in solving it we must have *facts*. The term "fact" is used in various senses. We speak of something that has happened (process of objective reality) as a fact; we also speak of knowledge of that something as a fact. What

interests us at the moment is the fact in the second meaning of the term. What knowledge can be called factual? Primarily it is the knowledge obtained by empirical means, i.e., by means of observation and description of the results. Theory must be built only on the basis of the data of experience. But, as we have already noted, in building a theory we must proceed from authentic knowledge, no matter whether it was obtained empirically or by reasoning (theoretically).

To state and solve a problem, to test the propositions made, we must already have some knowledge whose objective truth has been firmly established. This authentic knowledge also provides part of the factual basis of the inquiry. The facts of modern science are made up both of the results of empirical scientific observation and of laws whose reliability has been established in practice. Authenticity is the essential condition for the qualification of knowledge as fact. So facts are often called stubborn things; they have to be accepted whether we like them or not, whether we find them convenient for our research or not. All the other attributes of a fact, its *invariability*, for instance, that is, its relative independence of the system of which it forms a part, are derived from its authenticity. A fact is that which has been proved to be objectively true and remains so no matter in what system it is included. Hypotheses and conjectures may collapse and fail to stand the test of practice, but the facts on which they are based, remain and pass on from one system of knowledge to another.

Fact-gathering is an essential part of scientific research, but in itself it does not solve problems. We must also have a system of knowledge that describes and explains the phenomenon or process that interests us. This system may be at different levels: conjecture, hypothesis or authentic scientific theory.

Conjecture is a preliminary proposition that has not yet been fully investigated, a proposition whose logical and empirical foundations have not been explained. For example, the preliminary idea of Rutherford and Soddy concerning radioactive decay was only a conjecture that was subsequently developed by further research to the level of a scientific hypothesis.

How do conjectures arise? Why does one particular idea and not another occur to the scientist? The reply to these quite reasonable questions is that one cannot ignore the concept of *intuition.*

New ideas that change our former notions arise, as a rule, not through strictly logical deduction from previous knowledge and not as simple generalisation of experimental data, but as a kind of leap in the movement of thought. Such leaps are induced by the very nature of thought, by its immediate connection with practical

activity, which impels thought to seek new results beyond the bounds of what can be perceived by the senses and argued on strictly logical lines.

But this is not to say that intuition is independent and arises out of nothing. It gets its first push from the previous level of empirical and theoretical knowledge of the object. The abilities and experience of the thinker, his whole way of thought, are rather important in this respect. His intuition may be influenced by various episodes in his life, and the influence of these chance factors, the speed and suddenness with which an idea comes, sometimes look like "inspiration".

The history of scientific discoveries abounds in legends about the incidents that are supposed to have sparked off brilliant intuitions. We have all heard of "Newton's apple", "Mendeleyev's dream", and so on. But while not denying the possibility of such incidents, we must see behind every such case of intuition the effort of human thought, its constant and stubborn search for a solution to the problem it has posed. Intuition furnishes in concentrated form the experience of the previous social and individual intellectual development of mankind. There is nothing mystical about it, its immediacy is relative, and intuitively suggested theoretical propositions are afterwards tested by logical processes, as a result of which the original conjecture is either discarded as unfounded or acquires the form of a scientifically based *hypothesis*.

The transition from conjecture to hypothesis entails finding arguments that, as Einstein put it, turn "the miracle into something knowable". This is where logic, without which intuition would be left in mid-air, comes into its own. Existing knowledge is mobilised and new facts are sought that can turn the conjecture into a hypothesis. Engels describes the role of hypothesis in cognition as follows: "A new fact is observed which makes impossible the previous method of explaining the facts belonging to the same group. From this moment onwards new methods of explanation are required—at first based on only a limited number of facts and observations. Further observational material weeds out these hypotheses, doing away with some and correcting others, until finally the law is established in a pure form."[1]

A *hypothesis* is knowledge based on a supposition. The substantiation and proof of a hypothesis presupposes a search for new facts, the devising of experiments, and analysis of any previous results that have been obtained. Sometimes several hypotheses that are "tested" by various means are advanced to explain one and the

[1] F. Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, p. 240.

same process. Simplicity and economy, though supplementary in determining the most authentic theoretical system, are also of importance in choosing a hypothesis. Thought must take the most rational, clear and simple path in its approach to the problems of reflecting reality and all the richness of its interconnections. All other things being equal, preference must be given to the hypothesis that achieves its goal in the clearest, simplest and most economical way. But economy and simplicity are only contributing factors in our choice between hypotheses of equal value; they are not criteria of the truth of the hypothesis. The only criterion of that is practice in all its diversity. The substantiation and proof of a hypothesis turn it into a *theory*.

Theory is not something absolute, it is a relatively complete system of knowledge that changes in the course of its development. A theory is changed by adding to it new facts and the concepts that express them, and by verifying its principles. A time comes, however, when a contradiction is discovered that cannot be solved in the framework of the existing theory. This crucial moment can be detected by concrete analysis. Its arrival heralds the transition to a new theory with different or more exact principles.

Between a new and old theory there are complex relations, one of which is expressed in the *principle of correspondence*. According to this principle, a new theory acquires its right to exist when previous theories turn out to be *limited cases*. For example, classical physics is now a limited, particular case of modern theories. This principle expresses simultaneously both the continuity and development of knowledge. If the objective truth of a theory has been established, this theory cannot disappear without a trace and the succeeding theory only limits the sphere of its application. The rules of transition from new theory to old can be defined. The inclusion of one theory in a wider, more general theory helps to establish its authenticity.

6. Practical Realisation of Knowledge

As we have seen, knowledge arises and develops on the basis of man's practical activity and serves it inasmuch as it creates the prototypes of things and processes that man needs and can create. So knowledge must eventually be practically realised in some way or other. But for this it must be shaped accordingly and acquire the form of an *idea*.

In philosophical literature the term "idea" is often used in the broad sense as any thought, any knowledge regardless of its form:

concept, proposition, theory, and so on. There is, however, a more exact meaning of the term. An idea is a thought that achieves a high degree of objectivity, fullness and concreteness while at the same time having a practical purpose.

Thus in order to be realised knowledge must become an idea that combines three factors: (1) concrete, integrated knowledge of an object, (2) the urge for practical realisation, for material embodiment, and (3) purpose and programme of action, the subject's plan for changing the object. Such are the ideas of science through which production is reorganised and deep-going changes occur in society. Thus we speak of the idea of socialist revolution, the idea of space exploration, the idea of peaceful use of atomic energy, and so on.

Ideas are put into practical effect with the help not only of material means (tools, instruments of labour), but also of man's spiritual energies (will, emotion, and so on). As Lenin said, "...the world does not satisfy man and man decides to change it by his activity".[1] This human determination is based on the knowledge given to man by his intellect, his thought. But the latter must be linked with the will to change the world. The determination to act in accordance with an idea must mature and in this process much depends on the individual's belief in the truth of the idea, in the necessity of acting in accordance with it, in the real possibility of its being transformed into reality.

Belief or conscious *faith* in the rightness of one's actions based on knowledge is not ruled out by the Marxist-Leninist theory of knowledge. Marxism opposes the substitution of faith or habit for knowledge, it opposes fanatical faith. It draws a strict distinction between the blind faith in dogma on which religion is based and the belief that comes from knowledge of objective reality. A person who acts without believing in the truth of the ideas that he wishes to put into practice is deprived of the will, purpose and emotional drive that are needed for success. Not a single brilliant idea can be born or a single brilliant project realised without human enthusiasm, without a man's reason being influenced by the whole gamut of his feelings. Scientific knowledge must become personal conviction giving the individual the determination to take action designed to change the existing reality.

The process of the practical realisation of ideas, their conversion into the world of objects that confronts the individual is known in philosophy as *objectification*.

Objectification has two aspects: (1) the social, and (2) the

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Conspectus of Hegel's Book "The Science of Logic"*, Vol. 38, p. 213.

epistemological. The social aspect of objectification involves finding out the relationship between the object created by man's labour and man himself, as in the case of *alienation*, for example, which will be discussed later. Considering objectification from the epistemological standpoint, involves asking whether the object obtained in practice corresponds with the idea that was to be realised. When we put an idea into practice we solve the question of its objective truth and do away with all that is illusory in it. This process may reveal certain discrepancies between the idea and its realisation, which arise either because of the imperfection of the idea, the lack of sufficient knowledge and means of realising it, or because of the absence of the necessary material and spiritual means and conditions for its complete fulfilment in objective reality. Thus objectification sums up one cycle of research and reveals a new one.

Finally the object obtained in practice is analysed from the standpoint of its correspondence with man's rational aims.

The reasonable, the rational is not primordially given, is not a property of nature; it is the product of man's historical development, his labour and thirst for knowledge. The only bearer of reason is man who, through work and other forms of practice, introduces reason into the surrounding world and influences nature by realising his scientific ideas.

Since practice as an objective historical process is, on the one hand, subordinated to man's goals expressed in his ideas and, on the other hand, goes beyond them in creating something new, practice is always both rational and irrational.

In contrast to irrationalism, which absolutises the irrational element in life, divorces it from the rational, regards it as the dominant tendency of all development, dialectical materialism recognises the irrational as the opposite of the rational and quite often as an accompanying factor in the rational. There is no eternal irrational, but there may be something irrational in a given set of historical conditions. But the irrational as a subsidiary, unforeseen result of our activity does not remain forever, it is overcome by subsequent knowledge and practice.

Knowledge itself as a factor in human activity may also be evaluated in the categories of the rational and the irrational. By its very nature knowledge is rational, since it creates ideas that correspond to man's aims and needs, since it follows logic, certain established forms of reason. At the same time it quite often goes beyond these forms and cannot be explained by them, that is to say, it contains an element that can be overcome only by changing logic itself, by restocking its armoury with new forms and categories of thought. Irrationalism concentrates attention on this irrational

residue in knowledge which has not yet been explained in the existing forms of reason, regards it as the true essence and thus creates a distorted notion of the course of cognition.

The rational as the main stream of development of knowledge exists in two forms: *ratiocination* and *reason* itself.

Ratiocination means operating with the forms of thought, with abstractions according to a set programme or pattern, without going into the method itself, its limits and possibilities. Ratiocination divides the whole, the one, into mutually exclusive opposites, but cannot embrace them in the unity of their interpenetration The specific features of ratiocination are best seen in *algorithm*, the system of rules for performing various computations of an exact nature in which each stage determines the next, the whole process being divided into separate steps and the instructions for dealing with them provided in the form of a combination of symbols. This means that algorithmic operations can be performed by a machine. Ratiocination is essential to theoretical thought; without it thought would be vague and indeterminate. It makes thought systematic and rigorous, seeking to turn theory into a formalised system. But it is not ratiocination that constitutes the characteristic feature of human thought. This is expressed by reason itself.

As distinct from ratiocination, reason uses concepts with an awareness of their content and nature, and therefore reflects things and processes in a purposeful, creatively active way; reason is the instrument of transforming activity, of creating a world that answers to the needs and essence of man. Human reason seeks to reach out beyond the bounds of the already formed system of knowledge, to create a new system in which man's goals are expressed with greater fullness and objectivity. Whereas the characteristic feature of ratiocination is analysis, reason is characterised by synthesis, which is human creative ability taken to its highest level. Human knowledge is the unity of ratiocination and reason, from the heights of which objective reality is understood and the ways of its rational transformation are determined.

7. Knowledge and Value

The practical realisation of ideas takes place in culture, material and spiritual, in things, works of art, standards of morality, and so on. So how are ideas related to man's social needs? Marx observed that people begin not from a purely theoretical relationship to the objects of external nature, but from the active mastering of them, they "give these objects a special (generic) name, because they

know the ability of these objects to serve their needs satisfactorily ... they may call these objects 'goods' or in some other way, which means that they are practically using these objects, that they are useful to them...". [1]

The philosophical problem of *value* arose out of a growing understanding of this attitude to the objects of the external world as the means of satisfying human needs. The point is not whether the material and spiritual objects man creates and also the phenomena of nature that serve his needs should be given certain names, whether they should be called "goods", "values", or something else or classified in some other way. The real question is the nature of value, its relationship to the subject and object, to knowledge, and so on.

The objects of nature, of our material and spiritual culture have the ability to satisfy man's needs, to serve his aims. Hence they can and should be approached from the standpoint of value. How do objects acquire this ability? Does it come from nature or from man, from his special gifts and abilities? If we say that value lies only in the objects themselves, we endow them with the intrinsic properties of serving man and his aims. But we know that nature and its objects existed long before man himself came into being. On the other hand, we cannot simply say that an object may satisfy man's material and spiritual needs, regardless of its intrinsic qualities. If grain did not contain certain necessary substances it would not be a food, it would be of no use to man.

Marxist-Leninist philosophy regards value as a social and historical phenomenon and an element in the practical interaction of the subject and the object. The social world is not something extraneous to the material, natural process. The product of human labour is a continuation of nature. Thus value is a property of objects that arise in the process of social development, and at the same time it is also a property of the objects of nature that have been included in the process of labour, of everyday life and that are "the life-element of human reality". [2]

Certain schools in modern bourgeois philosophy divorce the value approach to objects and phenomena from their objective, scientific investigation. In point of fact, however, the scientific and value approaches to the objects of reality can be separated only in abstraction, for certain strictly defined purposes. The first approach seeks to register our knowledge of an object as it exists outside us and outside mankind in general, and to give a clear definition of

[1] Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 19, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1974, S. 363.
[2] K. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, Vol. 3, p. 298.

knowledge itself, that is, of objective truth. The second approach, on the contrary, seeks in considering both the object itself and its reflection to concentrate attention on the human relationship, to evaluate everything from the standpoint of the object's intrinsic ability to satisfy human needs; it considers not knowledge in its pure form, but the embodiment of knowledge in the material and spiritual culture that serves man and his aims. The value approach plays a great part, for example, in the moral or artistic consciousness, whose specific attitude to the objective world it largely expresses.

At the same time in real human activity, both objective and spiritual, the two approaches (the objective scientific approach and the value approach) are combined and cannot exist without each other; they flow from one source—man's practical relationship to objective reality.

HISTORICAL MATERIALISM

Chapter IX

HISTORICAL MATERIALISM AS A SCIENCE

Historical materialism has its own specific subject-matter—the most general laws of development of human society. This makes it relatively independent as a general sociological theory, as the scientific historical basis of communism. At the same time historical materialism is an inseparable part of Marxist-Leninist philosophy.

1. The Emergence of Historical Materialism

Pre-Marxist materialism was inconsistent and limited. It was unable to apply the principles of philosophical materialism to the study of social life and history and in this field held idealist views.

The great contribution of Marx and Engels to the development of scientific thought was that they completed the half-built edifice of materialism, that is, extended it to the study of society, thanks to which the materialist world outlook became for the first time comprehensive and fully consistent and effective.

Certain social and theoretical preconditions were required before historical materialism could come into being. It was ushered in by the logical development of progressive social, political and philosophical thought. But social conditions also played their part in revealing the possibility of discovering the laws of social life.

The acceleration of social development, the kaleidoscopic change of events and the radical break-up of social relations, beginning from the English, and especially the French (1789-1794) bourgeois revolutions, the extreme aggravation of class contradictions and collisions, the emergence on the historical scene of the working class—such in general were the social preconditions that favoured the appearance of historical materialism.

The great events that took place at the end of the 18th and in the first half of the 19th centuries showed that society was by no means a monolith but a living social organism subject to change and obeying in its existence and development certain objective laws that were independent of the human will and consciousness.

Marx and Engels arrived at historical materialism by extending philosophical materialism and materialistically revised dialectics to

the interpretation of society, by applying them to the revolutionary practical activity of the working class.

Showing the intrinsic, inseparable connection between historical materialism and general philosophical materialism, Lenin wrote: "Marx deepened and developed philosophical materialism to the full, and extended the cognition of nature to include the cognition of *human society*. His *historical materialism* was a great achievement in scientific thinking. The chaos and arbitrariness that had previously reigned in views on history and politics were replaced by a strikingly integral and harmonious scientific theory, which shows how, in consequence of the growth of productive forces, out of one system of social life another and higher develops...."[1]

The most general laws discovered by dialectical materialism operate in society, but here they take a specific form. If we wish to know the laws of development of human society, it is not enough to know the general principles of philosophical materialism and the laws of dialectics; we must also study the specific forms in which they take effect in the history of society, in social life.

It is only in a society with an antagonistic structure that the law of the unity and struggle of opposites takes the form of class struggle. And in what a great diversity of forms and trends has the class struggle appeared in various historical epochs!

The dialectical method, applied to society, and the method of historical materialism are, in essence, identical concepts. When applied to society, the dialectical method becomes concrete. This means that in addition to general philosophical categories we must have such purely sociological categories as social existence and social consciousness, material and ideological relationships, the productive forces and the production relations, the mode of production, the social-economic formation, the basis and the superstructure, social classes, nations, and so on. These categories sum up the major laws of social existence and socio-historical knowledge.

Marx and Engels formulated the basic propositions of historical materialism in the 1840s in such works as the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, The Holy Family, The German Ideology* and, particularly, in more mature form, in *The Poverty of Philosophy* and the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. The new view of history, of social development was at first only a hypothesis and method, but it was a hypothesis and method that for the first time made possible a strictly scientific approach to history. As

[1] V. I. Lenin, *The Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism*, Vol. 19, p. 25.

Lenin wrote, they made sociology into a science, because they made it possible to reveal the recurrence and regularity in the development of social relations, to generalise systems of the same type in various countries into the concept of the social-economic formation, to reveal the general element that unites them and at the same time the inherent differences due to the specific conditions of their development.

In the eighteen fifties Marx undertook his grandiose study of the highly complex social-economic formation of capitalism. In *Capital* he showed this formation in its inception, movement and development. He established how within it contradictions develop between the productive forces and the production relations, between social classes, how on the basis of material production relations a corresponding political superstructure, certain ideas, morals, domestic and everyday relationships arise. With the creation of *Capital* historical materialism became a substantiated scientific sociological theory. "Just as Darwin put an end to the view of animal and plant species being unconnected, fortuitous, 'created by God' and immutable, and was the first to put biology on an absolutely scientific basis by establishing the mutability and the succession of species, so Marx put an end to the view of society being a mechanical aggregation of individuals which allows of all sorts of modification at the will of the authorities (or, if you like, at the will of society and the government) and which emerges and changes casually, and was the first to put sociology on a scientific basis by establishing the concept of the economic formation of society as the sum-total of given production relations, by establishing the fact that the development of such formations is a process of natural history."[1]

2. The Subject-Matter of Historical Materialism

Human society is in its essence and structure the most complex form of existence of matter. It is a specific, qualitatively unique part of nature, in a certain sense opposed to the rest of nature. This interpretation of the interrelationship between society and nature fundamentally distinguishes historical materialism both from idealism, which in most cases creates an antithesis between society and nature, and from metaphysical materialism, which does not

[1] V. I. Lenin, *What the "Friends of the People" Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats*, Vol. 1, p. 142.

recognise the qualitative difference between them.

Giovanni Vico, the Italian philosopher of the 18th century, wrote that the history of society differs from the history of nature in that it is made by people, and only by people, whereas in nature phenomena and processes take place of themselves, as a result of blind, impersonal, spontaneous forces. The fact that society is the scene of action of people possessed of minds and wills, who set themselves certain goals and fight to achieve them, has in the past and often in our own time been a stumbling-block for sociologists and historians who seek to study the essence, the fundamental causes of social processes and phenomena. Some of them, absolutising the specific nature of social and historical events, metaphysically oppose the natural sciences, which study general, recurrent phenomena and processes, to the historical sciences, which are allegedly concerned only with the individual and unique. Thus, in the 19th century certain German philosophers representing one of the schools of neo-Kantianism (H. Rickert, W. Windelband) believed there must exist two different and even opposite methods of cognition: the so-called *nomothetic*, or *generalising method*, which is applied by the natural sciences, and the *ideographic*, or *individualising method* (concerned only with individual, unique events), which is used by the historical sciences.

But such a metaphysical counterposing of the natural sciences to the social sciences is far-fetched and unjustifiable. We are no more likely to find in nature than in the history of society two phenomena that are absolutely identical (for example, two animals of a species or two leaves on one and the same tree). On the other hand, in society, in history, besides the specific and the individual there is also the general, which manifests itself in the instruments of production, the productive forces, the economic activity, in the social relationships, in the political and spiritual life of various countries and peoples that are at the same stage of historical development. It is by detecting these general features that we are able to discover the laws of social life.

It might be supposed that since social events and processes are the result of people's own activity, it should not be so difficult to understand them as it is to understand the phenomena of nature. And surely it ought to be easier for man and society to establish their power over social relationships than to subjugate the colossal forces of nature that are hostile to man. But this picture is incorrect, as human history and the history of science show.

In the first half of the 19th century the natural sciences had already made considerable progress, but a general science of society was still only in embryo. Step by step mankind was getting to know

the laws and forces of nature and bringing them under control. But it turned out to be a far more difficult task to discover the true nature of human society and its laws. Even more difficult and prolonged was the task of mastering the social laws and processes and bringing them under the control of society. The possibility of solving these problems came with the creation of Marxist social science, with its application to the practical task of the revolutionary transformation of social life, with establishing socialism.

Human society, social phenomena and processes are studied by various sciences, each of which studies only a certain aspect of social life, one or another type of social relationships or phenomena (economic, political, ideological).

Historical materialism deals not with the separate aspects of social life, but with its *general laws and the driving forces of its functioning and development, with social life as an integrated whole*, the intrinsic connections and contradictions of all its aspects and relations, first of all, the relations of social existence and social consciousness. Unlike the specialised sciences, historical materialism studies, first and foremost, *the most general laws of the development of society, the laws of the rise, existence and motive forces of the development of social-economic formations.*

The general sociological laws, which concern all historical epochs, operate in each definite economic formation of society, in each epoch, in a specific way. Therefore, if we wish to obtain a correct idea of the character and essence of general sociological laws, we must study their specific functions in the various historical epochs, in the various formations (e.g., under feudalism, capitalism or socialism). Thus the concept of "general sociological laws" includes the intrinsic connections and relations that are characteristic of the most general laws of economic formations of society.

Historical materialism also differs from the science of history. Historical science implies study of the history of countries and peoples, of events, in their chronological sequence. Historical materialism, on the other hand, is a general theoretical, *methodological* science. It studies not one particular people, or one particular country, but human society as a whole, considered from the standpoint of the most general laws and driving forces of its development.

Historical materialism, like Marxist philosophy in general, combines both theory and method in one. It furnishes the dialectical-materialist solution to the basic, epistemological question of social science—the question of the relationship between social being and social consciousness. It tells us about the most general laws and driving forces of society and is therefore a scientific general socio-

logical theory. For this reason historical materialism is both an effective method of studying the phenomena and processes of social life, and a method of revolutionary action. Only with its help can the historian, the economist, the student of law or art find his way amid the complexities of social phenomena. It gives the political leaders of the working class and the Marxist-Leninist parties a guiding thread for investigation and understanding of the specific historical situation.

Marxist political economy and historical materialism are the mainstay of scientific communism, which studies the strategy and tactics of the working-class struggle, the laws and driving forces of socialist revolution, of the national-liberation movement and the world revolutionary process as a whole. In the context of the construction of socialism and communism it studies, along with other humanities, the social, political and spiritual aspects of the development of socialist society.

Historical materialism is also highly relevant to concrete social research. When employing mathematical methods or methods of polling, interviewing, circulating questionnaires and so on, one must have a firm footing in the general sociological theory of Marxism and its method. In its turn Marxist sociology, taken as a general theoretical science, relies in its development on specific sociological research, on the wide use of statistical and other empirical data concerning various aspects of social life. Specific sociological research reveals the mechanics of the functioning of sociological laws in all kinds of situations.

Historical materialism gives us an objective basis for scientific orientation in historical events, enables us to know and understand them, to predict them scientifically, and to see the prospects and trends of social development, thus providing the theoretical basis for revolutionary action.

3. The Laws of Social Development and Their Objective Character

More than one hundred years ago in the introduction to his *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* Marx gave the classical formulation of the basic propositions and principles of historical materialism: "In the social production of their existence, men inevitably enter into definite relations, which are independent of their will, namely relations of production appropriate to a given stage in the development of their material forces of production. The totality of these relations of production constitutes the economic

structure of society, the real foundation, on which arises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness. At a certain stage of development, the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production or—this merely expresses the same thing in legal terms—with the property relations within the framework of which they have operated hitherto. From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an era of social revolution. The changes in the economic foundation lead sooner or later to the transformation of the whole immense superstructure. In studying such transformations it is always necessary to distinguish between the material transformation of the economic conditions of production, which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the legal, political, religious, artistic or philosophic—in short, ideological forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out. Just as one does not judge an individual by what he thinks about himself, so one cannot judge such a period of transformation by its consciousness, but, on the contrary, this consciousness must be explained from the contradictions of material life, from the conflict existing between the social forces of production and the relations of production. No social order is ever destroyed before all the productive forces for which it is sufficient have been developed, and new superior relations of production never replace older ones before the material conditions for their existence have matured within the framework of the old society. Mankind thus inevitably sets itself only such tasks as it is able to solve, since closer examination will always show that the problem itself arises only when the material conditions for its solution are already present or at least in the course of formation."[1]

This classical, strictly scientific formulation of the basic propositions and principles of Marxist social theory demonstrates its two most important features: first, the consistent application of the materialist view of history as a law-governed process, conditioned in the final analysis by the development of the modes of production, and, second, strict historism, the consideration of society as something that is in a state of constant development.

Even before the appearance of Marxism sociological thought, particularly under the influence of the advances in natural science,

1 K. Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, pp. 20-21.

sought to understand social life, the history of society, as a law-governed process. But social laws were generally treated in the same way as the laws of the mechanical, physical or biological processes occurring in nature. The specific features that characterise social life, which is created by people with intellect and will-power, were thus ignored.

The great contribution of Marx and Engels was to reveal in social life, in the history of society, not only that which relates social laws to the laws of nature, but also to show that the socio-historical law differs radically from the law of nature. This is expressed in their description of social development as a *natural historical process.*

The natural historical process is a process that is as necessary and objective, as much governed by law, as the natural processes; it is a process that not only does not depend on men's will and consciousness but actually determines that will and consciousness. At the same time, unlike the processes of nature, the natural historical process is a result of the activity of people themselves. At first glance this proposition appears to imply a logical contradiction. How can we reconcile the fact that the historical process is created by people possessing consciousness and will, setting themselves certain tasks and goals, with the fact that history obeys certain necessary, objective laws that do not depend on human will and consciousness?

This contradiction can be explained if we remember that people (and particularly large groups of people—nations, classes, parties, etc.), in pursuing their aims, in being guided by certain interests, ideas and desires, at the same time always live under certain objective conditions that do not depend on their will and desire and that ultimately determine the direction and character of their activity, their interests, ideas and aspirations.

In complete accord with the materialist world outlook, historical materialism proceeds from the proposition that social existence is primary in relation to social consciousness. Social consciousness is a reflection of social existence. It may be a more or less correct reflection or it may be false. It is not social consciousness or the ideas of some political leader that determine the system of social life and the direction of social development, as the idealists assume. On the contrary, *it is social existence that ultimately determines social consciousness, the ideas, aspirations and aims of individuals and social classes.* What, then, is implied by the concept of "social existence", which holds such an important place in historical materialism?

In philosophical materialism the category of existence is regarded as identical with the concept of matter, of nature. Accordingly,

social existence is understood by Marxists as the material life of society, its production and reproduction. Social existence is comprised of social production and the necessary conditions for it, including the reproduction of people themselves, the system of social relations that arises in the process of the production of material goods, i.e., the production, or economic, relations, and the material aspects of the life of the family, of classes, of nations and other forms of human community.

Social existence is primary because it is independent of social consciousness; social consciousness is secondary because it is a reflection of people's social existence.

The question is sometimes asked: how are we to understand the independence of social existence from social consciousness? Do not people themselves create their means of production? Is not the distinguishing feature of human labour people's own purposeful activity? Do not people themselves establish their relations with one another in the process of production?

True, people themselves build their social life. But not always and not everywhere do they build it consciously. Of course, they perform every separate act of production consciously. But it does not follow from this that they are always conscious of the character of the social relations into which they enter in the process of production, of how these relations are changing, or what the social consequences of these changes are. Driven on by vital necessity, people work, produce and consume goods and exchange the results of their actions, and the economic relations thus formed do not depend on their conscious choice or desire, but on the level of social production they have achieved.

What is more, people's will, aims, desires and aspirations, conditioned by their social or personal interests, embodied in their actions and making their appearance on the stage of social life. clash, interweave and come into contradiction with one another with the result that the desired is only rarely achieved. Characterising the social development as a natural historical process, Engels wrote: "...History is made in such a way that the final result always arises from conflicts between many individual wills, of which each in turn has been made what it is by a host of particular conditions of life. Thus there are innumerable intersecting forces, an infinite series of parallelograms of forces which give rise to one resultant—the historical event. This may again itself be viewed as the product of a power which works as a whole *unconsciously* and without volition. For what each individual wills is obstructed by everyone else, and what emerges is something that no one willed. Thus history has proceeded hitherto in the manner of a natural process

and is essentially subject to the same laws of motion. But from the fact that the wills of individuals—each of whom desires what he is impelled to by his physical constitution and external, in the last resort economic, circumstances (either his own personal circumstances or those of society in general)—do not attain what they want, but are merged into an aggregate mean, a common resultant, it must not be concluded that they are equal to zero. On the contrary, each contributes to the resultant and is to this extent included in it."[1]

Only after the socialist revolution, when society acquires control over social relations, do people begin to achieve their aims on an ever increasing scale. Yet even in this period social development continues to remain a natural historical process, conditioned by objective causes and laws that exist outside people's consciousness and determine their will, consciousness, aims and tasks. Thus, socialism gradually limits the spontaneity of social development, but even here social processes are determined by objective conditions, by actual possibilities that people must take into consideration and proceed from in their actions. Even here subjectivism and arbitrariness may lead to negative results and action is crowned with success only if it corresponds to the objective social laws.

What is meant by social laws?

Any law, as we know, expresses an objective, necessary, stable connection between phenomena, between processes. Similarly, the laws established by historical materialism and other social sciences express a necessary, stable and recurrent connection between social phenomena and processes.

Some social laws operate at all stages of social development. These include the law of the determining role of social existence in relation to social consciousness; the law of the determining role of the mode of production in relation to a particular structure of society, the determining role of the productive forces with regard to economic relations; the law of the determining role of the economic basis in relation to the social superstructure; the law of the dependence of the individuals' social nature on the totality of social relations, and others. These are general sociological laws, they operate at all levels of social development, including communism.

Besides general sociological laws there are others that hold good only for certain social formations. These are primarily the law of the division of society into classes, which is characteristic only of certain modes of production, and the law of the class struggle as the

[1] F. Engels to J. Bloch in Konigsberg. London, September 21 [22], 1890, in: K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 488.

driving force of history, which remains valid only for those social-economic formations that are based on antagonism between classes.

Some critics of historical materialism say that a law is a relationship that exists always and everywhere. If the law of the class struggle does not conform to this demand, it is not then a law.

The laws of social life are, in general, shorter-lived, and have a narrower sphere of application than the laws of nature. Nevertheless they are objective, real laws expressing intrinsic, relatively constant connections between social phenomena and processes. After all, even the laws of the biology of the Earth do not operate on other planets of the solar system. But this does not lead anyone to doubt their reality, their objectivity.

Some bourgeois economists and sociologists elevate social laws (for example, the laws of the existence and development of capitalism) to the rank of eternal, natural, intransient laws; all stages of development of society are seen through the prism of the development of capitalist relations.

Criticising such views Engels wrote: "To us so-called 'economic laws' are not eternal laws of nature but historical laws which appear and disappear; and the code of modern political economy, in so far as it has been drawn up accurately and objectively by the economists, is to us simply a summary of the laws and conditions under which alone modern bourgeois society can exist—in short, its conditions of production and exchange expressed in an abstract way and summarised. To us therefore none of these laws, in so far as it expresses *purely bourgeois relations*, is older than modern bourgeois society; those which have been more or less valid throughout all hitherto existing history express only those relations which are common to all forms of society based on class rule and class exploitation."[1]

Every law operates under definite conditions and its effectiveness depends on those conditions, which vary from one formation to another and within each formation, and from one country to another.

Just as capitalism in every country has acquired certain features connected with the historical past of that country, with a greater or smaller share of pre-capitalist economic structures, so, too, does socialist society, obeying in its development the general laws of the development of the communist formation acquire in each separate country certain features and peculiarities connected with its histor-

[1] F. Engels to Friedrich Albert Lange in Duisburg, Manchester, March 29, 1865, in: K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1975, p. 161.

ical past, with the level of development there of the productive forces and of culture. But these peculiar features do not affect the main thing; they do not abolish and cannot abolish the general laws inherent in the new social formation. There are no national laws of the development of capitalism or socialism, laws that are characteristic of each separate country. The laws of each separate social-economic formation, though specific in relation to the general sociological laws, are themselves general laws for all countries that are part of a given formation. Here, as in other fields, there is dialectical unity of the general and the particular, the international and the national. Ignoring or violating this unity, overstressing the national to the detriment of the general, the international, may lead to nationalist tendencies. Here there is a dividing line which the Marxist-Leninist, the internationalist in politics and dialectician in theory, should see and understand.

4. People's Conscious Activity and Its Role in History. Freedom and Necessity

In regarding social development as a natural historical process do we not prevent ourselves from obtaining a correct understanding of the role of man's creative, revolutionary transforming activity? Does this not belittle the historical activity, the historical initiative of the progressive social forces, the role of the subjective factor? Those who take the subjective idealist view of history have often accused the Marxists of fatalism. Revisionists of both the Right and "Left" varieties today oppose the Marxist-Leninist view of the objective laws of social development and historical necessity. Following the bourgeois sociologists, they maintain that this approach underestimates people's free, purposeful activity, that it lowers man's status, that it is antihumanist. They claim that it regards the economic factor as all, while ideas and various forms of social consciousness—philosophy, morality, religion—are nothing, and from the standpoint of historical materialism have no significance whatever. This is how the critics of Marxism present the case. But they confuse historical materialism with economic, vulgar materialism. The two trends are, however, radically opposed to each other.

Historical materialism in no way ignores the significance of politics, of social consciousness, of various spiritual values; on the contrary, it recognises their tremendous role in social life. Reactionary ideas and reactionary policy (for example, anti-communism, racist ideology, militarism, nationalism and chauvinism) play an

extremely negative role. They poison people's minds and act as a brake on social progress.

By contrast, progressive, revolutionary ideas and the policies based on them play a great part, particularly when these ideas become widespread among the masses, when they act as a mobilising, organising and transforming historical force. Marxism-Leninism and the policies of the Marxist parties and socialist states that are based upon it play such a role in the present age.

The bourgeois critics of historical materialism try to discover a contradiction between the revolutionary activity of the Marxist parties and their views on historical necessity, particularly on the inevitable collapse of capitalism. These critics say, if we know that a lunar eclipse is inevitable and bound to occur according to certain laws, no one would think of creating a party for promotion of such an eclipse, but the Marxists teach that capitalism is bound to be superseded by socialism and yet they create political parties to fight capitalism and establish socialism.

It would be foolish and absurd, of course, to create parties for the "organisation" of a lunar eclipse or the coming of spring and summer. Human activity does not participate in the motion of the Earth round the Sun, or in the motion of the Moon. The laws of social development, unlike the laws of nature, are laws of human activity. Outside this activity they do not exist. Therefore, social revolutions, including socialist revolutions, occur only as a result of the struggle of the progressive classes based on application of the objective laws of social development, particularly the laws of class struggle. The more profound and comprehensive their knowledge of the laws of social development, the laws of social revolution, the higher the consciousness, the solidarity, unity and organisation of the working people, the more successful the struggle for socialism, the swifter the progress of history.

Just as knowledge of the laws and processes of nature offers us the best chance of taming its spontaneous forces, so does knowledge of the social laws, of the driving forces of social development allow the progressive classes to consciously create history, to fight for social progress. By getting to know the objective laws of social development the progressive social forces are able to act not blindly, not spontaneously, but with knowledge of what they are doing, and, in this sense, freely.

The laws of social development usually function as *tendencies*. They break their way through many obstacles, through a mass of chance events, through conflict with opposite tendencies supported by hostile forces, which have to be paralysed and overcome in order to ensure the victory of the progressive forces and tendencies.

Conflict between these various tendencies means that in every historical period there exists more than one possibility. Thus, imperialism is always charged with the possibility of war, and in the imperialist countries there are always forces interested in unleashing wars. But along with this possibility, which is inherent in the nature of imperialism, there today exists another real possibility—the possibility of ensuring peace. This arises from the new balance of forces in the world, from the growth of the forces of socialism, of the revolutionary movement of the working class of the capitalist countries, of the national-liberation movement of all peace-loving forces fighting against imperialism.

Historical necessity is, therefore, not the same thing as predetermination. In real life, thanks to the effect of objective laws and various trends of social development, there arise certain possibilities, the realisation of which depends on the activity of the masses, on the course of the class struggle, on the scientifically worked out policies of Marxist parties.

Knowledge of the laws of historical necessity, of the objective laws of social development, far from freeing people of the need to act, demands their active, conscious participation in order to realise these laws. The teaching of historical materialism on social development as the natural historical process does not belittle the role of man, his conscious activity, but rather shows the significance of this activity, of the struggle of the progressive social forces. Ignorance of these laws, failure to take into consideration actual conditions and means of struggle, condemns the masses of the working people, the working class and its parties, either to hopelessness and passivity or to adventurism and defeat.

"Freedom does not consist in any dreamt-of independence from natural laws, but in the knowledge of these laws, and in the possibility this gives of systematically making them work towards definite ends. This holds good in relation both to the laws of external nature and to those which govern the bodily and mental existence of men themselves.... Freedom of the will therefore means nothing but the capacity to make decisions with knowledge of the subject."[1]

This is how historical materialism resolves the old philosophical and sociological problem of the relationship between freedom and necessity, the problem of free will and determinism.

Human history has not been a continuous and straight ascent, always and everywhere expressing the march of progress. It has known reverses, zigzags, disasters such as wars, barbarian invasions, the decline and fall of powerful states, the disappearance of entire

[1] F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, pp. 140-41.

nations. But taken as a whole it has been an ascent, from one social-economic formation to another, from lower to higher forms.

Nor has this movement of history been uniform. Its multiformity has incorporated much that is specific and connected with the peculiar features and conditions of development of various peoples. But in this lies the great significance of historical materialism, which has revealed in the seeming chaos and infinite diversity the law, the regularity and recurrence in the main and most essential things that characterise the development of mankind.

Is there any meaning in the history of mankind, in the development of society, or is this movement as meaningless and elemental as the flow of rivers that sweep away everything in their path? There are no grounds, of course, for acknowledging any meaning imported to history from without, such as divine predestination, a pre-arranged programme or supernatural destiny for the peoples. At the same time the history of society in every epoch has its own definite content. The peoples, the progressive social forces that make history, blaze the trail for new, more advanced economic, political and other social relations, and fight to accomplish certain historical tasks. People may be more or less fully aware of these tasks, or they may misapprehend them, sometimes in a mystified, religious, fantastic form. In the great transitional periods of history the conscious, creative activity of the masses, of the progressive classes, attains new heights. Thus the history of mankind is not entirely spontaneous and social consciousness also plays its part.

The content of the present epoch is the struggle between the forces of socialism and capitalism, the revolutionary transition from capitalism to socialism. The conscious struggle of the working class and its allies for socialism accelerates historical movement. And this movement takes place through the overcoming of various difficulties, profound contradictions and antagonisms; it therefore proceeds not in a straight line. Here, too, there are zigzags and set-backs. But taken as a whole, the contemporary historical process is heading towards socialism and communism, and in this lies its profound meaning.

Chapter X

MATERIAL PRODUCTION IS THE BASIS OF SOCIAL LIFE

As we have seen in the previous chapter, the subject-matter of historical materialism is human society and the most general laws of its development. The first step towards discovering these laws was to establish the role of material production in the life of society. It will easily be understood that society cannot exist without producing the material goods needed for human life. This proposition is obvious. But Marx and Engels did not stop there; they took a new step forward which constituted a great discovery in science. This discovery established the law-governed dependence of the system of all social relations on the mode of production of material goods.

In the process of production people do not only create material products; production does not only provide people with means of subsistence. *In producing material goods people produce and reproduce their own social relations.*

The study of social production, its structure, its constituent elements and their interconnections, therefore, makes it possible to penetrate into the essence of the historical process, to reveal the deep-going social mechanisms that operate in the life of society.

1. Society and Nature, Their Interaction

Material production furnishes the key to the interpretation both of the internal structure of society and its interrelationship with the external environment—surrounding nature. Production is, above all, the process of interaction between society and nature, In this process of interaction people obtain from surrounding nature the necessary means of existence. Labour, production, is at the same time the basis of the formation of man himself as a social being, his emergence from nature.

From the simple use of objects provided by nature, which is sometimes observed among animals, our ancestors gradually passed on to *making* tools and this was the essential factor in the emergence of human labour itself. Labour activity had two decisive consequences. First, the organism of man's ancestors began to accommodate itself not only to the conditions of the environment

but to labour activity. The specific features of man's physical organisation—upright walk, differentiation of the functions of the front and rear limbs, development of the hand and the brain—evolved in the long process of adaptation of the organism to the performance of labour operations. Second, because it meant concerted action, labour stimulated the emergence and development of articulate speech, of language as a means of communication, the accumulation and transmission of labour and social experience.

Two important stages may be noted in the process of the formation of man. The first of them is marked by the beginning of tool-making. This is the stage of man in formation (Pithecanthropus and Neanderthal man). In recent times in South and East Africa the remains of man's oldest ancestors have been found in geological strata dating back 2.5 million years. Primitive stone tools were found with their bones. This confirms the intrinsic connection between the development of labour and human evolution. The second major qualitative stage was the replacement, about 100,000 years ago, in the middle Paleolithic age, of Neanderthal man by a modern type (*Homo sapiens*—rational man). Whereas the build of Neanderthal man still retained many features reminiscent of the apes, there have been no radical changes in man's physical type since the emergence of *Homo sapiens*. In this period corresponding major changes took place in production, involving the making of various implements of labour (from stone, bone and horn). The stages in the evolution of man and his implements of labour were at the same time the stages in the formation of human society itself in its primary form, namely, tribal society. Man is a social being, he never lived and could not appear outside society or before society. Nor, however, could society appear before man; the new forms of relations between individuals developed only because man's ancestors were becoming people.

There are many features distinguishing man from the animals. The most important of them, however, are production of the instruments of labour[1], articulate speech, and the ability of abstract thought. The first of these is primary. According to Marx and Engels, people "...begin to distinguish themselves from animals as soon as they begin to *produce* their means of subsistence...".[2]

Taken in its most general form, the process of production is what man does to the objects and forces of nature in order to obtain and produce his means of subsistence; food, clothing, a place to live and

[1] According to Benjamin Franklin's definition, which Marx quotes in *Capital*, man is a "tool-making animal" (see K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 175).

[2] K. Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology*, Vol. 5, p. 31.

so on. This process presupposes human activity, or labour itself, affecting the objects of labour.

Unlike the instinctive forms of human activity, human labour, in the true sense of the word, is *purposeful activity*, which results in the creation of an object which, as Marx put it, already existed in man's imagination, that is, ideally. Comparing the behaviour of the bees, which so skilfully build their honeycomb of wax, with the activity of the architect, Marx observed that even the worst architect is superior to the best bee in that before he builds his house he has already created it in his own head.

Labour activity takes place with the help of the corresponding means of influencing the object of labour—tools.

Tools bring about the transition from the immediate, direct actions, characteristic of the animals, which use their natural organs, claws, teeth, etc., to essentially human actions mediated by the instruments of labour. The latter continue, as it were, man's natural organs, performing at first the same functions as the natural organs, but intensifying their effect.

Society may be described as a social organism. Whereas the biological organism has a system of natural organs performing certain functions that are needed for its existence, the development of man, of human society involves the improvement of artificial organs—tools, means of labour.

To sum up. *Human labour differs from the activity of even the most developed animals in that, first, it exerts an active influence on nature, instead of merely adapting to it as is characteristic of the animals; second, it presupposes systematic use and, above all, production of the instruments of production; third, labour implies purposeful, conscious activity; fourth, it is from the very beginning social in character and inconceivable outside society.*

For these reasons social development differs from biological development. Man develops as a social being without any radical changes in his biological nature. Hence the difference in the character and rate of both processes. Radical changes in social life take place within periods that would be quite insufficient for any significant changes to occur in the development of the biological species (not counting, of course, the changes that occur in nature thanks to man's activity). Biological development, moreover, is tending to slow down as certain species of organisms specialise and adapt themselves to the environment. On the other hand, the development of society shows a general tendency to accelerate, despite its various twists and turns and temporary set-backs.

This has been largely due to the appearance of new mechanisms of continuity in the social development compared with biological

evolution. In the organic world the accumulation and transmission of information from one generation to another is effected mainly through the mechanism of heredity, which forms the basis of the inborn instincts, and in the higher animals also through parents' transmission to their progeny of certain skills. In social life a tremendous part is played by each generation's inheritance of the means of production created by the previous generation, and also by the continuing of social experience embodied in language, thought, culture and traditions. Whereas biological transmission of properties is limited by the information that can be stored in the apparatus of heredity (in the genes), the inheritance of social experience occurs constantly and has no limits. Viewed in the most general sense, culture is the embodiment of this experience, the sum-total of the material and spiritual values created in the course of human history. Each generation enriches culture with new achievements. In contrast to the biological world, where all changes take place spontaneously, unconsciously, human society is afforded ever greater possibilities in the course of history of consciously and purposefully changing the conditions of its material life and regulating its interrelations with nature.

Any material system presupposes a definite type of connection between its constituent elements. The specific nature of social life is determined by the production, or economic, connection. All forms of social relationships are made up in the final analysis on the basis of the relations between people arising in the process of production—the production relations, which cement the social organism and give it its unity.

The qualitatively new forms of connection that make up the social organism have corresponding specific laws of development that differ from biological laws. Marx and Engels, already in their day, showed the futility of attempts to apply biological laws to the explanation of social phenomena. Like other laws of nature, biological laws do not regulate or determine the development of social phenomena. Society is governed by its own specific laws, which are revealed by historical materialism and other social sciences.

This does not imply, however, that society develops in isolation from nature. The development of society is inconceivable without certain natural preconditions. Chief among these are the natural conditions surrounding society, usually called the *geographical environment,* and the physical organisation of the people themselves who comprise the *population.*

Various naturalistic theories in sociology have attempted to ascribe the determining role in history to these natural precondi-

tions. Thus, the exponents of geographical determinism (the French philosopher Charles Montesquieu, the English historian Henry Thomas Buckle, the French geographer Elisee Reclus, and others) tried to attribute the differences between the social systems and histories of various peoples to the influence of the natural conditions in which they live. In fact, however, we find extremely different social systems in similar geographical conditions, and one and the same kind of social system in different geographical conditions (for example, the tribal system was to be found at various times in Europe, Asia, Africa, America and Australia). Nor can the historical succession of social-economic formations be attributed to the influence of the geographical environment, if only because it occurs far more quickly than changes in this environment, which do not depend on the influence of society.

The basic methodological fault of the naturalistic theories in sociology is that they see the source of social development as something outside society. The influence of external conditions on any developing system, including society, cannot be denied or underestimated, of course. But change in such a system is not simply the imprint of changing environment, the passive result of its influence. A system has its own internal logic of development and in its turn exerts an influence on the environment.

If we adopt the modern classification of systems, society may be regarded as one of the so-called open systems, which exchange not only energy but also matter with their environment. Between society and nature there occurs a constant metabolism, a constant exchange of substances, which takes place, as Marx showed, in the process of labour, of production. From the vegetable and animal world man obtains his means of nutrition and raw material for making objects of use. Mineral resources provide him with the material for producing the means of production. Production involves the use of various sources of energy: first of all, man's own muscular strength, then the strength of the animals he tames, of wind and water, and finally the power of steam, electricity and the energy of chemical and atomic processes.

The geographical environment influences the development of society in various ways at various stages of its development, but the direct influence of geographical conditions on man's nature and his psychological make-up is never of prime importance (as Montesquieu and other geographical determinists maintained). The main thing is their mediated influence—through the conditions of production and intercourse. At the lower cultural stages, when man is mainly concerned with obtaining ready-made products, more importance attaches to the natural means of subsistence: rich fauna

and vegetation, fertile soil, an abundance of fish, and so on. At the higher stages, when industry develops, the natural means of production, such as navigable rivers, waterfalls, forests, metals, coal and oil are of far greater importance.

The direction of economic activity is not, of course, always the same among different peoples, it depends largely on the geographical conditions under which they live. Among the tribes inhabiting the northern subtropics, the fertile areas of Mesopotamia, the valley of the Nile, and so on, the productive forces developed more quickly than among the tribes that lived in conditions of the Far North and the Far South.

At the same time the uneven rates of development of production depend on different social conditions, on how relations took shape between different peoples—on their interconnection or isolation, their mutual intercourse or conflict, and so on.

The influence of geographical conditions is always mediated by social conditions, primarily by the level of development of production. People make various use of the properties of their environment, more and more new materials are brought into production, mankind penetrates new regions of nature (the depths of the earth and sea, outer space, etc.) and masters them in order to satisfy its needs. This means that society's links with nature become increasingly widespread and many-sided.

Abundance of natural resources will never, of course, lose its significance; it constitutes an important element of a country's economic potential. But with the development of production society's dependence on natural conditions is relatively diminished.

The twin processes of the expansion of economic ties and the reduction of dependence on natural conditions are both predicated on the increase of man's influence over nature. Whereas natural conditions change comparatively slowly if left to themselves, their rate of change may be accelerated by man. Man's natural environment bears the stamp of his production activity.

Geographical conditions on Earth are to a significant extent the result of the activity of living organisms, which are responsible, for example, for the formation of limestone, dolomite, marble, coal, peat, fertile soil, and so on. The active role of life on Earth is expressed in Academician Vernadsky's concept of the *biosphere*, the planetary envelope that comprises the organisms and also inanimate matter taken over and transformed by life. With the appearance of man the "pressure of life" on the planetary envelope became immeasurably more powerful.

Man influences the vegetable and animal world, exterminates certain species of plants and animals and introduces and changes others.

The scale of man's influence on the Earth's crust is comparable with that of the most powerful geological forces. People have extracted from the earth in the last five centuries not less than 50,000 million tons of coal carbon, 2,000 million tons of iron, 20 million tons of copper, 20,000 tons of gold, and so on. Man's production activity brings to the surface not less than five cubic kilometres of rock per year. Man drives canals through continents, and wins back land from the sea. By watering deserts, drying marshland and altering the course of rivers he changes even the climatic conditions of his life. The climate is also indirectly influenced by man's production activity because the burning of oil, coal and peat annually returns to the atmosphere about 1,500 million tons of carbon. The amount of carbon in the air is one of the factors controlling the temperature on Earth.

The effect of nature on society is totally spontaneous, but the effect of society on nature is always the result of man's conscious struggle for existence. Besides the intended transformation of nature, human activity also has unforeseen results, which in many cases subsequently cause tremendous losses. Karl Marx in his day observed that cultivation, when it progresses spontaneously, and is not consciously controlled, leaves deserts behind it.[1] The unrestricted felling of timber, for instance, upsets the flow of rivers, widens ravines, and causes drought. Huge areas of land are eroded and become unsuitable for cultivation. The use of chemical pesticides and weed killers often destroys not only the insects and the weeds but poisons many other plants and animals.

A particular feature of the contemporary stage of interaction between society and nature is that the whole surface of the globe is becoming the scene of human activity; man is even venturing beyond its bounds into outer space. He is making use of nearly every substance that is to be found in the Earth's crust and many sources of natural energy.

However, as the scale of man's activity increases, the danger of his uncontrolled influence on the natural environment also increases. One of the side-effects of man's activity, for example, is the upsetting of the balance between various processes in nature and pollution of air and water with so much industrial waste, radioactive matter, etc., that this may constitute a threat to his own existence. The French scientist Jean Dorst writes in his book *Before Nature Dies*: "...paradoxical though it may sound, the most essential problem of modern times in the field of protection of nature is

[1] See K. Marx to F. Engels in Manchester. [London,], March 25, 1868, in: K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 190.

to protect our own species from ourselves. *Homo sapiens* must be protected from *Homo faber*."[1] Yet it is not man *per se* who is to blame for this danger, but his shortsightedness, the subordination of his activity to considerations of profit or narrow utilitarianism. The destruction of the natural environment has assumed such vast proportions that humanity is faced with the threat of an ecological crisis. But while warning of this danger, many Western ideologists are unable to offer any realistic way out of the situation. Some of them have proposed the idea of "zero growth", that is to say, halting all growth of industrial production. Quite apart from the impracticability of this idea, we must remember that the great majority of humankind, particularly the populations of the developing countries, are suffering not from excessive growth of production but from too little of it.

The attempts to shift responsibility for the ecological crisis on to technological processes, the scientific and technological revolution are obviously so misguided that even many liberal-minded authors, who are in no way advocates of revolutionary change, recognise the necessity for planning, for restricting private ownership and the activities of the monopolies, particularly the transnationals, who are destroying the natural environment in the name of maximum profit.

Today it is becoming urgent for man to make wise use of the processes of nature on a global scale, which can alone make man the true master of the Earth. This necessity is also implied in the concept evolved by natural science of the *noosphere* (from the Greek *noos*—reason), as the sphere of interaction between nature and society organised by conscious human activity. The biosphere of the 20th century is becoming what Vernadsky sees as the "noosphere, created primarily by the growth of science, of scientific understanding, and the social labour of mankind which is based upon it".[2] The creation of such a noosphere presupposes the planned use of natural resources on the scale of whole countries and continents, and this is beyond the scope of capitalist society; to achieve this there must be social ownership of the means of production. Socialist use of nature is above all the use of nature in the interests of the whole of society and not for private profit as under capitalism; it is the planned transformation of nature, the integrated utilisation of natural wealth. It stands to reason that in the conditions of socialism this does not come about automatically but demands production planned and managed in such a way as to

[1] Jean Dorst, *Avant que nature meure*, Lelachaux et Niestle, Heuchâtel, Suisse, 1965, p. 124.

[2] Quoted from *Nature and Society*, Moscow, 1968, pp. 335-36 (in Russian).

protect the natural environment.

If men are to be good masters of the Earth they must not tolerate a departmental approach; the work of transforming nature must be dealt with as a single whole. With economic development, the growth of cities and industrial centres the task of protecting the environment becomes ever more vast and complicated.

To sum up, *man's influence on nature depends on the level of the productive forces, on the character of the social system and on the level of development of society and people themselves.*

In principle the same is true of another natural precondition of human history—man's bodily organisation, his biological properties. It is these biological properties that give him his need for food, clothing, and so on. But the means by which he satisfies these needs are determined not by biological but by social conditions. Procreation also proceeds according to human biological properties and yet the growth of population is primarily a social phenomenon, regulated by the laws of the development of society.

From the naturalistic standpoint population growth is regarded as a factor independent of the laws of social development and even determining that development. Moreover, some sociologists treat it as a positive factor and regard the increase of the population as one of the causes that impel people to seek new sources of food supply and thus promote the development of production; others (the British economist Thomas Malthus at the close of the 18th century, and his followers today, the neo-Malthusians) see the rapid growth of population as a social disaster.

According to Malthusian "law", the population increases faster than its food supply, and hence, so Malthus maintains, come the starvation, unemployment and poverty of the working people. His conclusion is that to improve their position the working people should control the number of births in their families.[1]

In reality the relation between the growth rate of the population and production of the means of subsistence is not something given once and for all. With a relatively conservative technical base and slow development in the precapitalist social-economic formations there was pressure of excess population on the powers of production,[2] which often led to large-scale migrations of population. On the other hand, in conditions of rapid technical progress the growth of production of the means of subsistence considerably

[1] Malthusian ideas have subsequently been used by reactionaries to justify imperialist aggressive wars, the extermination of "superfluous population", and so on.

[2] Karl Marx, *Forced Emigration, etc.*, Vol. 11, p. 530.

outstrips the population growth rate, as is seen, for example, in the increase of per capita production.

In the countries of developed capitalism it is not overpopulation that exerts pressure on the productive forces, but rather the productive forces that pressure the population, and create a relative surplus of population. This was what Marx saw as the law of population inherent in the capitalist mode of production.

The conclusion reached by Marx from his analysis of the problem of population under capitalism is of great importance in sociology. His conclusion is that every historically determined mode of production has its own specific laws of population, which are historical in character. Marx considers that "an abstract law of population exists for plants and animals only, and only in so far as man has not interfered with them."[1]

Size of population, its growth, density and territorial distribution undoubtedly exert an influence on the development of society. At the same time the actual number of people that go to make up a society depends on the degree of development of production. At the beginning of the neolithic age (i.e., about 10,000 years ago) the primitive tribes that had spread over all continents counted only a few million people. By the beginning of the present era the world's population was between 150 and 200 million people, while by the year 1000 it had risen to about 300 million. It reached its first one thousand million in 1850, its second in 1930, its third in 1960, and its fourth in 1976.

Acceleration in the rate of population growth is not a cause of change in the mode of production and people's conditions of life; rather it is one of the results. Population increase depends on the ratio of deaths to births. Both these processes are influenced by a large number of social factors: economic relations, standard of life, housing conditions, medical development, health services, and so on. The types of reproduction of the population also depend on social and economic conditions.

Though basically a spontaneous process, population growth can be influenced to a greater or smaller extent by state policy, legal and other measures aimed at encouraging or, on the contrary, limiting the birthrate. The neo-Malthusians maintain that the present "population explosion" is no less dangerous than that of an atom bomb. They compare the increasing numbers of the earth's population to a wildfire cancer growth and maintain that within the next ten years new extensive famine areas will make their appearance. However, they refuse to see the social causes of famine.

[1] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 592.

Scientific calculations show that fuller use of agricultural land and increasing its yields would make it possible to feed ten times more people than there are at present in the world. There is no doubt that the use of the tremendous food resources of the seas and oceans and further advances in synthesising food products by chemical means will reveal possibilities of feeding an even greater number of people. The realisation of these possibilities, however, depends not so much on finding more rational means of using the biosphere, as on solving social problems, overcoming economic and cultural backwardness in many countries, and elimination of the imperialist oppression and exploitation of millions of working people.

Criticism of Malthusianism does not imply that for society in general there is no problem of regulating population growth and achieving a rational type of reproduction. Engels admitted the abstract possibility in the future of an increase in the world population that would make it necessary to keep the number within certain bounds. "If it should become necessary for communist society to regulate the production of men, just as it will have already regulated the production of things, then it, and it alone, will be able to do this without difficulties."[1]

2. The Productive Forces of Society. Man's Place in the System of the Productive Forces

Material production is the sphere of social life where the material product is created that is afterwards consumed by society as a whole, by further production or by individuals.

No matter how high the level of its development, a society cannot exist and develop without production. A complete cessation of production would spell disaster for society, which cannot exist without production.

In the process of production people interact with nature and with one another. These two types of relationship constitute the inseparably connected aspects of any concrete mode of production—*the productive forces and the production relations*. Consequently, analysis of the mode of production in its general form entails discovering what the productive forces and production relations are and how they are interconnected.

The productive forces are the forces by which society influences

[1] F. Engels to Karl Kautsky in Vienna. London, February 1, 1881, in: K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 315.

nature and changes it.

Nature itself cannot be included among the productive forces of society. Nature is the universal *object of labour.* As Marx said, labour is the father of wealth, and nature is its mother. Not all of nature, of course, is the immediate object of labour, but only that part of it which is drawn into production, inasmuch as it is used by man.

From nature man extracts the stuff, the raw material, from which things are made in the process of labour. But with the exception of the extracting industries, the ploughing up of virgin land, and so on, production is usually concerned with objects that have previously had some labour put into them. Thus the steel that goes into making a machine has previously been melted. Raw material (for example, cotton, grain, ore) and semi-manufactures are man-made objects of labour. Man not only acquires in nature ready-made objects of labour, but also creates them for himself. Industrial progress involves the use of more and more new materials. Modern industry uses various rare metals, new alloys and new kinds of synthetic materials—plastics, synthetic fibres, and so on. This is entirely natural since new materials widen man's productive powers.

The *means of labour* are the thing or complex of things that man places between himself and the objects of labour, and that serve as an active conductor of his influence upon that object. The objects and means of labour, that is, the material elements of the process of labour, constitute in their totality the *means of production.*

The composition of the means of labour is extremely varied and changes from one epoch to another. Industrial and agricultural production today makes use of machines and engines and various subsidiary means of labour that are needed for transporting and storing products and for other purposes. Out of all the means of labour that have been applied in any particular epoch and are typical of it, Marx concentrates on those that directly serve as the conductor of man's influence on nature—the *instruments of production.* In Marx's phrase these constitute the bone and muscle of the system of production.

But the means of labour become an active force that transforms the object of labour only in contact with living labour, with *man.* Man, the working masses are a productive force thanks to their knowledge, experience and the skills needed to put production into practice.

To sum up, *the social productive forces are the means of production created by society and, above all, the instruments of labour, and also the people who put them into operation and*

produce material goods.

The means of labour are the *determining* element in the productive forces, inasmuch as they determine the character of man's relation to nature. "It is not the articles made, but how they are made, and by what instruments, that enables us to distinguish different economic epochs."[1]

People, the working people, with their knowledge and experience, are the *main* productive force of society. Since it is man who uses the existing machinery, creates new machinery, who operates the instruments of labour and carries on production, drawing on his skill, knowledge and experience. At the same time these human abilities depend on the available means of labour, on what instruments they are using. Without cars there could be no drivers, without aeroplanes no airmen.

With the transition to machine production, education, culture and the scientific knowledge needed for working with machines and perfecting them assume ever-increasing significance. The labourer cannot simply throw down his spade and start driving an excavator. He must master the new machine, even though the excavator performs the same work as he did. At the same time machine production creates a need for unskilled and semi-skilled labour.

This is why the development of workers engaged in production has a contradictory nature.

In his analysis of capitalist machine production Marx showed that the worker in becoming an element in the "technological system" of production is not only compelled to obey its rhythm but himself becomes an "appendage of the machine" and performs the simplest auxiliary operations in operating it. So the appearance of capitalist machine production sharpens the contradiction between mental and physical labour and does not lead to a harmonious rise in the cultural and technical level of the whole mass of immediate producers. And although in capitalist conditions the sophistication of machinery does create a demand for skilled labour, it is only socialism that pioneers the task of raising the workers' cultural and technical level to that of engineers.

The level of development of the productive forces is indicated by the *productivity of social labour.* A major factor in the growth of the productivity of labour is the creation of more productive instruments and means of labour, that is, *technical progress.* The improvement of the existing instruments and means of labour and the creation of new ones that are more productive, of new technology, the development of the power base and the corresponding

[1] K. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. I, p. 175.

re-equipment of all branches of the economy are, in fact, the mainspring of the development of social production.

In the course of the existence of society the productive forces have achieved tremendous development. Historically, production begins with the making and using of the most primitive stone, bone and wooden implements—the stone chisel and point, the club and spear, various utensils made of bone. The discovery of how to make and use fire was one of the greatest achievements of man's early stage of development. This discovery, as Engels said, finally set man apart from the animal kingdom. Another great step forward was the emergence of pottery. Man's capabilities were considerably expanded by the invention of the bow and arrow. People thus accumulated a collection of primitive implements that enabled them to engage in hunting, fishing and collecting. As tools improved, they tended to become more and more specialised for certain operations. At the earliest stage of primitive society man produced only the instruments of labour, while taking his means of existence ready-made from nature (appropriative economy), which made him heavily dependent on natural conditions.

The great revolution in the development of primitive production was the transition from appropriation to production of the means of existence, which was connected with the emergence of agriculture and cattle-breeding. This transition occurred in the Neolithic period. The collecting of fruits and roots prepared the way for land cultivation, while hunting helped to introduce cattle-breeding. The extremely primitive tilling of the soil with the hoe demanded an enormous amount of labour. But this was a fundamentally new step in development because it allowed man to use a new and powerful means of production—the soil. The development of agricultural implements led to the appearance of the plough and other means of cultivation and harvesting. Further progress involved the use of metal tools, at first of copper and bronze, then of iron, and tilling, cattle-breeding, and metal tools raised production to a new level. There was now a basis for the division of social labour into cattle-breeding and soil cultivation, into craft and agricultural production, and later, into mental and physical labour. People began to produce more, it became possible to accumulate wealth. All this had its social consequences and prepared the transition from the primitive-communal system to class society. We should also mention the tremendous importance that the invention of a written language had for the development of production and for human culture as a whole.

In class society production developed at first on the basis of artisan's tools set in motion by man himself or the muscular power

of animals. Marx describes this base as conservative in the sense that the instrument of the artisan is specialised and may achieve certain forms that set a limit to its development. For example, knives, axes, spades and hoes may change somewhat in being adapted to various forms of activity, but only within certain limits. Of course, these instruments improved and production developed on their basis, giving rise to various industries. Fairly soon, the power of water and wind (wind mills, the water-wheel) began to be used, and more complex instruments were introduced. Mankind was enriched with important inventions that were to play a great part in the development of technology: the mechanical clock, gun-powder, printing and the production of paper, the compass, and so on. All this shaped the conditions for a new qualitative leap in the development of the productive forces—the emergence of machine production.

It was manufacture that provided the immediate technical preconditions for the appearance of the machines. Cooperation in labour, that is, the joining together of people for the performance of various tasks, had always taken place on a certain limited scale—in quarries and mines, in workshops, in building, and so on. Manufacturing differs from simple co-operation in that it is based on a detailed division of labour for the production of a certain kind of goods. This division of labour in manufacturing leads to specialisation of tools and of the workman himself, in the course of which he becomes a performer of a particular function. Whereas a craftsman created the whole product, in manufacturing the production of this item is broken down into a number of specialised operations, which creates preconditions for the replacement of the individual workman's operations by the machine.

Machine industrial production began in the 18th century, when England became the scene of the first industrial revolution. Marx links this revolution with the appearance of working machines—the loom and the spinning-machine. Such machines replaced a large number of workmen by performing operations that had been previously done by hand. But the working machine demands a motor, and such a motor was invented in the form of the steam-engine. This motor, the transmission mechanism and the working machine constituted the first production mechanism of machine production. The cycle of development was completed by the creation of an adequate technical base—the production of machines by machines. Thus a fundamentally new step was taken in the advance of the productive forces, introducing a new epoch in the development of production. The industrial revolution which had begun in England in the 18th century, spread during the 19th to

other European countries, to North America, and by the end of the century to Russia and Japan. Machine production formed the material and technical base of capitalism.

In modern times technology is still developing on the basis of machine production. The rise of machine production led to an enormous, literally leap-like growth in the productivity of labour. It then gave the process of labour a social character, bringing together large masses of people "under one roof", in factories and mills, broadly developing various kinds of division and cooperation of labour, establishing close ties between specialities, factories, and branches of production. All this makes for such close interconnections between the various types of production that any change in one industry quickly affects others. And finally, in contrast to the artisan basis, the technical basis of machine production, according to Marx, is revolutionary, because the possibilities of its development are practically unlimited, while the conscious application of science to production makes recurrent technical revolutions inevitable. The development of machine production has revealed what tremendous forces human labour can bring into operation.

In the last century, when analysing the prospects of the further development of the productive forces, Marx showed that machine production was advancing from separate machines to the use of a system of machines and, in future, would move on to the creation of automated production in which man would be excluded from the direct process of material production and retain only the task of controlling, adjusting and repairing machines and constructing new ones.

Scientific advances and their technological application by the middle of the 20th century created the preconditions for a new grandiose leap in the development of the productive forces, for the contemporary *scientific and technological revolution*, which combines revolutionary changes in science and in technology. This revolution introduces the age of *automated production* and leads to a fundamental change in man's place in production by creating in the course of its development the actual technical preconditions for realisation of Marx's prevision.

The working machine and motor made it possible to transfer from man to technical devices the function of immediate influence on the object of labour. But man still retained control of the machine and the process of production. Thanks to computer techniques, the machine is today taking over the function of controlling production as well. The direct process of material production can now be carried out automatically, without human

participation. This raises the productive forces to a qualitatively new level. At the moment we are still at the beginning of this process, but its prospects are already fairly clear—development is moving from partial to full automation, when there will be not merely a tool, or even a system of machines, between man and nature, but an automated production process.

The scientific and technological revolution is also at work in the field of energetics, where it involves peaceful uses of nuclear power and, in prospect, the discovery of how to use the energy of controlled thermonuclear reaction, the storing and use of solar energy. It is likewise expressed in the creation of space technology, which has given man access to regions beyond the Earth.

The scientific and technological revolution *changes the status of science in society*, its relations to production. The industrial revolution of the 18th and 19th centuries took place with the participation of natural sciences, in the sense that production set science certain problems and the scientific solution of these problems made it possible to perfect production.

This process goes even further in the conditions of the present-day scientific and technological revolution. Here the *development of science actually gives rise* to new forms of production. Production still remains the final material basis of the development of science, but the social necessity is for science to *anticipate* the development of technology. As the British scientist John D. Bernal noted, "in earlier times science followed industry; now it is tending to catch up with it and lead it...".[1]

With the development of machine production in general, and particularly in the context of the scientific and technological revolution, science becomes increasingly *a direct productive force*. It would be wrong to understand this thesis of Marx's in the sense that science in general merges with production and loses its relative independence. The point is that in becoming a direct productive force science continues to be a system of knowledge and a sphere of intellectual production.

The transformation of science into a direct productive force implies, first, that the means of labour, the technological processes, are becoming a result of the materialisation of scientific knowledge; new technology cannot be created without science, and even the existing technology cannot function without it. Second, scientific knowledge becomes an essential component of the experience and knowledge of all working people taking part in the process of production. Third, the actual control of production, of the tech-

[1] J. D. Bernal, *Science in History*, Watts, London, 1954, p. 23.

nological process, particularly in automated systems, becomes a result of the application of science. Fourth, the very concept of production is widened and comes to include not only the production process but also research and development, so that the spheres of science and production tend to penetrate one another.

The overall effect is expansion of the human component of the productive forces, which already include not only manual workers but engineers, technicians and even scientists who are directly concerned with the scientific and technical servicing of the production process. The development of the STR presupposes maximum development of machinery, automation and comprehensive mechanisation of production, all-round use of science in production and combination of the achievements of science and technology with the advantages of socialism.

Automation and "scientification" of production create the basis for bringing together physical and mental work, lead to the intellectualisation of the labour of the workers, evoke important changes in the professional structure of labour, and rapidly increase the proportion of skilled workers, technical and engineering personnel. Modern automatic lines make special demands on the individual, on his ability to react quickly to contingencies, assess the situation correctly, and assume responsibility.

Bourgeois writers spend a lot of time accusing Marxism of regarding man merely as a "productive force" and attaching no value to him as an individual.

In reality, however, it is not recognition of man as a productive force that belittles him, but the oppression of man, the conversion of his labour into a curse, and the worker himself into a slave in conditions of private ownership of the means of production. But Marxism-Leninism is opposed to all forms of oppression. The challenge of Marxism-Leninism is that man as a productive force should be a free worker, a highly developed, creative personality. This is real and not illusory humanism.

In the conditions of capitalism, where modern technical progress gives rise to increasingly acute social antagonisms, we find various kinds of "technical mythology", which absolutise the role of technology and regard it as a force hostile to man.

The authors of such concepts divorce technology from man, underestimate the role of the working class, the working masses as a whole, and ignore the significance of social conditions, on which the ultimate outcome of technical development primarily depends. If under capitalism life actually is becoming more standardised and man is losing his individuality, the cause is not technological progress in itself but the domination of private ownership of the means

of production, implying a relationship based on exploitation. In socialist conditions technological progress has other social consequences, because here it serves the development of the working masses, their material and spiritual advance.

The development of the scientific and technological revolution in the context of socialism necessarily implies the improvement of the individual's creative abilities and his liberation from unskilled and monotonous labour. The all-round development of the individual—the ideal of communism—becomes, when considered from the standpoint of the future, a need of the productive forces themselves. Here there is unmistakable evidence of the fact that the trend of the scientific and technological revolution coincides with the needs of the communist development of society. As L. I. Brezhnev said in his Report to the 25th CPSU Congress: "We Communists work on the assumption that only in socialist conditions does the scientific and technological revolution take its true direction, a direction that is in the interests of people and society. And in turn, only on the basis of accelerated development of science and technology can the ultimate aims of the social revolution—the building of communist society—be achieved."

The development of technology and the productive forces must, therefore, not be severed from social *production relations.*

3. Production Relations

In producing material goods people interact not only with nature but with one another. In the process of production certain relations necessarily arise between people. These are the relations of production. Or, as we shall call them, more briefly, production relations. They are an inseparable aspect of every form of human production activity, of all material production. Production embraces as a unity both the productive forces and production relations.

These relations are a very important component of any society and we shall consider their place and role in the vital activity of the social organism in more detail later. At the moment we must note that what made it possible to understand the functioning and development of production not only as a technological but as a *social* process was the singling out of production relations as the thing that determines both the social character of every element of the productive forces and the social nature of the mode of production as a whole. It is the production relations that tell us whether a workman is a slave, or a serf, or a wage labourer, whether a machine serves as a means of exploiting labour or, on the contrary,

as a means of making labour easier, whether the factories are working to enrich the exploiters of other men's labour or to satisfy the needs of the mass of the working people, and so on.

Production relations are economic relations. They are studied in detail by the science of economics. What interests historical materialism is the question of their specific nature, their structure and the laws of their interconnection with the productive forces and other social phenomena.

In what way do production relations differ from other social relations?

First of all, like the productive forces, production relations belong to the *material* side of social life. The materiality of these relations is expressed in the fact that they arise and exist objectively, independently of human will and consciousness. People are not free in the choice of the relations into which they enter in the process of production. In producing the material goods needed for their existence, they produce and reproduce their production relations according to the level the productive forces have achieved. In the process of the development of the material life of society, of economic relations there comes into being "an objectively necessary chain of events, a chain of development which is independent of your *social* consciousness, and is never grasped by the latter completely".[1]

As *social* relations, production relations should be distinguished from organisational, technical relations, which are determined by the technology of production, by the technical division of labour between the various trades or specialities. The character of these social production relations depends on who in the given society owns the basic means of production or, in other words, how the question of *ownership of the means of production* is decided, ownership being understood not simply as the legal right to own something but as the actual totality of economic relations between people, mediated by their relationship to certain things, namely, the means of production. Thus "... to define bourgeois property is nothing else than to give an exposition of all the social relations of bourgeois production".[2] This methodological approach is applicable also to the definition of other forms of property.

Ownership of the means of production may be either social or private. But both types of ownership vary greatly in the degree of their development and the concrete forms they have taken, not to mention the existence of a number of transitional forms. This

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, Vol. 14, p. 325.

[2] K. Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1975, pp. 141-42.

must be taken into consideration even when the problem is being studied in its "pure form", so to speak.

If certain individuals or a part of society own the means of production while the rest of society is prevented from taking part in such ownership, this form of property is private. Private property or ownership is the basis of relations of domination and subordination, relations of exploitation, that is to say, the appropriation of other people's labour. Three basic forms of exploitation—slave-owning, feudal and capitalist—have been known in history. The slave is himself the property of the slave-owner. Feudal property makes it possible to deprive the serf of a part of what he has produced (or his labour time) in favour of the feudal lord. The most developed form of private property is the capitalist.

The economic structure of capitalism is determined by two elements: the capitalists' private ownership of the basic means of production—factories, mines, mills, etc., and free labour power, free both of personal dependence and of the implements of labour, of the means of subsistence. Economic necessity forces the worker to sell his labour power to the owner of capital as a commodity and only in this form is he able to unite with the implements of labour and begin the process of production. At various stages in history the workers themselves (peasants or artisans) have owned small private property based on personal labour. As a rule, such property plays only a subordinate role and in class-divided society its owners are themselves subjected to exploitation.

Social property—ownership by groups of working people or the whole of society—places people in an equal position in relation to the means of production, and the "exchange of activity" here takes the form of mutual assistance and cooperation. The forms of this cooperation, like the forms of social ownership, differ very substantially inasmuch as social ownership (in the form of the property of the clan or tribe) prevailed at the very earliest stages of human society and some varieties of it (communal property, for instance) continued to exist even in pre-capitalist class societies. A new era in the history of mankind begins with the institution of socialist social ownership of the means of production. Although, under socialism, cooperative ownership by separate groups of working people still survives, the leading role is played by the property of society as a whole, of all the people, whose representative is the state. As an economic category social property manifests itself in the planned development of the national economy, in collectivist relations of comradely cooperation and socialist mutual assistance among all the working people of socialist society, in distribution according to the quantity and quality of labour, and so on. The

future of this form of property is communist property owned by the whole people, the highest possible form of ownership of the means of production, the basis of the further development of human society.

Thus, the social character of production relations depends on the form of ownership. As a definite totality or system, production relations embrace the forms in which the producer is united with the implements of labour in the process of material production, the relations of exhange of activity and of the products of activity, and also the distribution of the material goods produced. The limits of production relations are determined by the movement of the material product, which begins in the sphere of direct production, passes through a definite cycle in this sphere, and then through exchange and distribution passes to the consumer and ends in the sphere of individual consumption.

The productive forces and relations of production are two aspects of social production that cannot exist apart. Only in abstraction can the productive forces be considered without the relations of production, or vice versa. In reality they are inseparable from one another, just as content and form are inseparable, if we regard the productive forces as the content and production relations as the social form.

4. Dialectics of the Development of the Productive Forces and Relations of Production

The interaction of the productive forces and production relations obeys a general sociological law that has operated throughout history, *the law of the correspondence of the production relations to the character and level of development of the productive forces.* This law characterises an objectively existing dependence of the production relations on the development of the productive forces, and establishes the fact that the production relations take shape and change under the determining influence of these forces.

When human beings had only just emerged from the animal state, the stone tools and other implements that they used were so primitive and unproductive that the individual armed with these tools would have been unable alone to obtain the material goods he needed for subsistence. People were compelled to work together, to support one another because of the weakness of the individual in the face of the mighty forces of nature. Thus the main productive force here was the strength of the collective itself, and it was on this basis that collectivist primitive communal relations arose.

The appearance of agriculture and stock-raising, the transition from stone to bronze, and then iron tools raised the productivity of labour with the result that it became possible for people to engage in productive activity on an individual or a family scale. The surplus product (i.e., the product remaining after the satisfaction of essential needs) made its appearance, along with the division of labour, the tendency towards individualisation of certain producers within the framework of the commune, and, as a result, private property.

The law of the correspondence of production relations to the character and the level of development of the productive forces manifests itself at this stage of production in the fact that private-property production relations correspond to the private character of the productive forces. It would seem that only small private property based on personal labour of the producers corresponds to the instruments of individual use. But this form of property never created a specific social-economic formation because it was incapable by itself of ensuring progress in the economic and cultural spheres. For this reason we find developing alongside it various forms of private property based on the appropriation of other people's labour, that is, on the exploitation of man by man, made possible due to the appearance of surplus labour and the surplus product.

When people were using simple implements of labour to cultivate the earth, or in artisan production, it was possible to appropriate the suplus product or surplus labour only by enslaving the person himself, by forcing him to work, that is to say, by applying direct, immediate coercion to labour.

The first and most primitive form of exploitation—slavery—was based on brute force, by means of which a person was turned into an instrument of labour, a rightless slave. Direct coercion, forced labour was widely used under feudalism in relation to peasants, who were themselves small property owners but at the same time constituted the main exploited class and the main productive force of feudal society.

As capitalism arises, the direct producer is gradually separated from the means of production.

One result of this process is the formation at one end of the scale of a market of free labour power—free from the means of production and from the means of subsistence—and at the other, concentration of the means of production (capital). People are deprived of the means of labour and the means of subsistence and compelled by the threat of starvation to sell their labour power to the owner of the means of production, to the capitalist. This is the point where *economic* compulsion to work which, as Marx put it,

chains the worker to the capitalist, begins to operate. There comes into being an industrial proletariat, a class totally separated from the means of production and creating by its labour all the wealth of capitalist society.

In this society exploitation lies in the fact that the capitalist class appropriates the surplus value created by the workers' labour. But owing to the development of the productive forces, the socialisation of production, the product now becomes the result of the labour not of a single producer but of the aggregate, collective labour of many people. So under capitalism there develops a contradiction between the social character of the process of production and the private, capitalist form of appropriation, which is the fundamental contradiction of this form of society. This contradiction reveals itself in the cataclysms of the spontaneous capitalist economy, in anarchy of production and crises of overproduction, and in the class struggle of the proletariat.

The creation of capitalist monopolies, large groupings of capitalists, and the development of state-monopoly capitalism reflect within the framework of capitalism the social nature of the contemporary productive forces. But this does not change, and cannot change, the nature of capitalism, because the bourgeoisie remains the owner of the basic means of production. *Only social ownership of the means of production can correspond to the social character of the process of production.* The development of large-scale industry not only creates the material preconditions for socialist ownership of the means of production but also makes it imperative to move on from capitalism to socialism.

The contemporary scientific and technological revolution makes for the further socialisation of production. In this context capitalism and capitalist private ownership of the means of production become utterly incompatible with the needs of social progress.

Under capitalism, with the economy geared to the interests of capitalist profit, automation reduces the numbers of workers engaged in material production and throws large masses of people into the "redundant" category, awakening new conflicts and insoluble contradictions. Capitalism stands in the way of the application of the great discoveries of science and technology for the benefit of the working prople, in the interests of man's all-round development.

In socialist society the scientific and technological revolution does not give rise to such conflicts. It contributes to the building of the material and technical base of communist society, to the growth of material well-being and raising of the cultural and technical level of all working people, to their all-round development.

It stands to reason that there are a number of common consequences of the scientific and technological revolution that affect both capitalism and socialism, such as the greater role of science in society, the increase of expenditure on scientific research, the greater significance of engineering, scientific and technological work, the emergence of new professions, and so on. It would also be a mistake to assume that in socialist society the development of the scientific and technological revolution does not give rise to any contradictions and proceeds without a hitch. But the advantage of socialism lies in its ability to solve the problems set by this revolution on a planned basis, because it corresponds to the needs and aims of the development of the socialist social relations. The further socialisation of production evoked by the STR creates a material basis from which there grows the objective possibility and necessity of socialist relations of production developing into communist production relations.

To sum up, each form of production relations exists for as long as it provides sufficient scope for the development of the productive forces. But gradually the relations of production come into contradiction with the developing productive forces and become a brake on them. They are then superseded by new relations of production, the role of which is to serve as the form of the further development of the productive forces. Marx observes that people never give up the productive forces they have brought into being, but this does not mean that they do not give up the production relations that have till then served as the form of development of these forces. "On the contrary, in order that they may not be deprived of the results attained and forfeit the fruits of civilisation, they are obliged, from the moment when their mode of carrying on commerce no longer corresponds to the productive forces acquired, to change all their traditional social forms."[1]

If the production relations change under the influence of the progress of the productive forces, then what, it may be asked, causes the development of the productive forces themselves?

Here we must consider the action of a whole set of causes. In our examination of how geographical conditions and the growth of population interact with production we found out that their influence is considerable and may stimulate or retard it. But they are not the basic source of development of the productive forces.

This development has an inner logic of its own. The more complex instruments of labour arise on the basis of their simpler pre-

[1] K. Marx to P. V. Annenkov in Paris. Brussels, December 28 [1846], in: K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 31.

decessors. The experience and knowledge accumulated by man find their material expression in the means of labour and man has to adapt himself to them. In any relatively developed economy an important change in one industry inevitably affects the others. For example, the development of industrial production leads to the technical reequipment of agriculture, to the mechanisation of construction; the intensification of agriculture demands production of artificial fertilisers, which stimulates the development of the chemical industry, and so on. As technology develops and new and more efficient tools and machines appear, the existing machines become obsolete and demand replacement. Society is compelled to reckon with this logic of the development of production. But the internal needs of the productive forces still do not explain why production develops faster in some cases and slower in others, more or less evenly in some cases and through booms and crises in yet others. Nor can this be ascribed to the development of science. All technology is materialised knowledge, and without the development of human knowledge there could be no technical progress. Today research and development is a powerful source of technical progress. But the development of science itself, its actual growth rate depends in great measure on the development of production.

The *needs* of society, of people, are an important factor in the development of production. Directly or indirectly, production always serves the purpose of satisfying certain human needs, and a complex dialectical interconnection between these needs and production establishes itself in a society. The needs themselves are evoked by the development of production, the satisfaction of some needs gives rise to new ones, and this is bound to influence production in some way or another. But the relation of man's needs to production is mediated by production relations: the needs do not influence the productive forces directly, but do so through production relations.

Every form of production relations subordinates production to a particular aim, and this aim has certainly not always been the essential needs of humanity. The mass of the population in class society, the classes are motivated by various economic interests and corresponding stimuli, which are specific in every specific case; capitalist society is stimulated in one way, socialist society in another. The active nature of the production relations shows itself in the influence they have on the development of productive forces as an economice form. This form is the basis for the emergence of objective regularities and stimuli characteristic of the society in question.

The ruling classes in class-divided societies subordinate the

development of production to their interests and needs. Thus in capitalist society the development of the productive forces cannot be attributed to the need of the working people for improvement of their material position. Here the decisive thing is the demand for the production of surplus value, of profit for the capitalists. It is the objective laws of expanded production and reproduction, the laws of production of maximum profit, the laws of capitalist competition, that have constituted and still constitute the driving forces of development of the capitalist production, its productive forces.

But what stimulates the actions of the working masses, the direct producers? This depends on the position of the direct producer in the system of the given production relations. A certain form of production relations is progressive inasmuch as it creates for the masses certain advantages as compared to their previous situation. The slave has no interest whatever in work, because he works under threat of the lash. Under feudalism the immediate producer—the peasant—has his farm, his family, and is therefore to some extent interested in work, in raising its productivity. The worker confronts the owner of all the means of production—the capitalist—as a formally equal owner of commodities. He sells his labour power and the higher his skill the higher the wage the worker receives, and therefore he is compelled to some extent to develop the productive power of his labour. But working for a capitalist forces the worker to regard his work only as a source of livelihood. The whole mechanism of capitalist production and reproduction is so constructed that it compels the worker to strain every effort and ability. The worker's fear of being thrown out of production and becoming unemployed has no less force than the slave overseer's whip.

So, the causes of the development of the productive forces must never be considered in isolation from the social conditions in which this development occurs, that is, from the system of the given production relations. The development of the crude technology of primitive society and that of modern machine technology cannot be ascribed to the same causes. Each historically definite mode of production has its own *specific causes (sources) and economic laws* of development of the productive forces that are valid for a given epoch, and the character of these laws depends on the character of the production relations.

The effect of the production relations is positive when the production relations corresponding to the productive forces promote their development, and negative when this correspondence is upset and the production relations act as a brake on the development of the productive forces. What, then, is the braking effect of capitalist production relations? It shows itself above all in the fact

that not all the possibilities of the level of production already achieved are used. Marx wrote, "...the capitalist mode of production meets with barriers at a certain expanded stage of production which, if viewed from the other premise, would reversely have been altogether inadequate. It comes to a standstill at a point fixed by the production and realisation of profit, and not the satisfaction of requirements".[1] This, according to Marx, is where the limitations of capitalist production are revealed. And this applies to people as well as to the means of labour. In putting into effect the monstrous intensification of labour, capitalism overstrains and exhausts people and creates an army of unemployed and semi-unemployed, thus squandering the most important productive force of society—man himself. Chronic unemployment goes hand in hand with periodic recessions, chronic underloading of production capacities, and limited and one-sided use of the scientific potential. Through militarisation of the economy capitalism turns the productive forces into destructive forces.

The effect of capitalist production relations becoming a brake on the development of the productive forces is that the development of production proceeds extremely unevenly, in booms and recessions, in periods of "prosperity" and crises.

Thus, the active role of the production relations does not mean that the forms of property by themselves move or hold back the development of production. Only people develop production or, on the contrary, are not interested in its development. They develop and change their mode of production, which constitutes the basis of their history.

The law of the correspondence of the production relations to the character and level of development of the productive forces *determines not only the development of the given mode of production, but also the necessity for the replacement of one mode of production by another.*

As the productive forces develop in the womb of the old society new production relations are conceived that form a certain economic structure, the embryo of the new mode of production. Slavery is conceived already in the womb of the primitive communal system, and the capitalist system—in that of the feudal society.

The expanded productive forces come into conflict with the old production relations prevailing in society. This conflict cannot be resolved, that is, the new production relations cannot prevail by means of a simple quantitative change. Here there must be a

[1] K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, p. 258.

qualitative transition, the revolutionary destruction of the old obsolete and hidebound economic, social and political forms, which opens the road for the establishment of a new mode of production.

The emergence of the socialist mode of production has its own special features. In the womb of the old society, under capitalism, there arise only the material preconditions of the socialist mode of production in the form of the enormous socialisation of production, the creation of modern productive forces that are social by their nature. But the new production relations of socialism corresponding to the newly emerging productive forces do not take shape and cannot take shape in the conditions of capitalism.

So the socialist system cannot arise in any other way than by the conscious, planned building of the new society based on the winning of political power by the working class.

The law of the correspondence of production relations to the character and level of development of the productive forces continues to operate under socialism. But here its operation does not lead to revolutionary upheavals and destructive conflicts. Society is now able to take timely measures to bring production relations into correspondence with the developing productive forces, that is, to consciously solve the contradictions that arise between them.

The Communist and Workers' parties, the working people of the socialist countries, seek to realise the growing possibilities of accelerating social and economic development offered by the socialist system at its present stage. The full use of scientific and technological advances, the raising of economic effectiveness of production and quality of the product, the futher improvement of the system of economic management, faster growth of the material well-being and culture of the working people, and the development of socialist democracy will ensure the integrated, intensive and proportional development of all branches of the economy and the various spheres of social life.

Chapter XI

THE SOCIAL-ECONOMIC FORMATION. UNITY AND DIVERSITY OF THE WORLD HISTORICAL PROCESS

The theory of social-economic formations is the corner-stone of the materialist understanding of history as an integral, law-governed natural historical process of social development. By singling out the various forms of society that constitute qualitative stages in its development, this theory allows us to place the study of history on a concrete basis. If the history of society is built out of the history of specific social-economic formations, we must study the laws of their development and transition from one formation to another. This is how Marx proceeded. In *Capital* he analysed the laws of the establishment and development of the capitalist social-economic formation and showed its historically transient character and the inevitability of its replacement by a new and higher one—the communist.

1. The Concept of the Social-Economic Formation

In the previous chapter we saw that the basis of social life and historical development is the mode of production of material goods. No matter what social phenomena we take—the state or nation, science or morality, language or art, and so on—they cannot be understood in their own terms, but only as phenomena engendered by society and corresponding to certain social needs. Just as people's way of life in a particular society is basically characterised by the mode of production, so are all other social phenomena dependent ultimately on the mode of production and proceed from it. The mode of production is the material and economic base of society and determines its entire internal structure. The concept of social-economic formation primarily expresses this subordination of all social phenomena to the material relations of production.

The study of sociaty shows that all social phenomena, all aspects of society are organically interlinked. For this reason Lenin characterised the social-economic formation as a single, integrated "social organism". The social-economic formation is not an aggregate of individuals, not a mechanically assembled set of unrelated social phenomena, but an *integral social system*,

each of whose components (that is, the various social phenomena) must be regarded not by itself, not isolated, but only in its connection with other social phenomena, with society as a whole, because each of them plays a definite and unique role in the functioning and development of society. This integrity is expressed by the concept of the social-economic formation.

The history of society is made up of the histories of individual countries and peoples living in various geographical and historical conditions and possessing their own particular ethnic, national and cultural features. History is extremely diverse, and this has led some philosophers and sociologists to maintain that it never repeats itself, that all events and phenomena are wholly individual and the task of historical science can be only to describe these individual events, and evaluate them from the standpoint of some ideal. Such an approach to history is bound to lead to subjectivism because the very choice of ideals and values for judging history becomes arbitrary and loses the objective criteria that are needed to distinguish what is essential, paramount, determining in history, and what is derivative and secondary.

The Marxist theory of society overcame this subjectivism by singling out from the totality of social relations *production relations as the most important and definitive.* It was production relations that provided the objective criterion for distinguishing the essential and inessential in social life. This also revealed the repetition and regularity in the systems of various countries, the general and the specific features in the history of individual peoples at one and the same stage of historical development.

The concept of the social-economic formation makes it possible not only to single out the general features to be found in the systems of various countries, but also to distinguish one historical period from another. Every social-economic formation is a definite stage in the development of human society, a qualitatively unique system of social-economic relations.

The history of society is the history of the development and replacement of social-economic formations. Marxist historians usually define five basic social-economic formations, which differ from one another according to the prevailing forms of property (production relations): primitive communal, slave, feudal, capitalist, and communist.

The sequence of these formations is not a fixed pattern that the history of every people must obey, because some peoples are held up in their development while others bypass whole formations. History also produces various transitional forms.

The theory of the social-economic formations, by registering the

basic stages in historical progress, reveals the main line of human development and shows that, varied though the paths of historical development of individual countries and peoples may have been, there is in history a certain recurrence or regularity, a certain law.

The social-economic formation is a definite type of society, an integrated social system functioning and developing according to its own specific laws on the basis of the given mode of production. The economic skeleton of the social-economic formation is formed by the historically determined production relations, but the whole body, its flesh and blood, as it were, comprises other social phenomena and relations, forming the complex structure that we must now investigate.

2. Structure of the Social-Economic Formation. Basis and Superstructure

All social-economic formations differ qualitatively but they do have certain general structural features that are inherent in all or, at least, in the majority of such formations.

Every society is characterised by a *definite type of social relations.* Social relations are a special form of connections and interactions existing only in society and arising in the process of people's social activity, that is, activity in the sphere of production, politics, intellectual life, and so on. These relations are called social relations not only because they exist only in society, but also because they emerge from the interaction of large masses of people, of social groups and classes.

Social relations are extremely varied. Their different types include: economic, political, legal, socio-psychological, organisational, moral relationships, etc. To find any regular interconnection in this diversity we must make up our minds which relations are essential, or primary, and which are derivative, or secondary.

Lenin wrote that by introducing materialism into history Marx had divided all social relations into *material* and *ideological* relations, the latter forming a superstructure built upon the former.

Material relations are above all the production (economic) relations that arise in the process of the production of material goods as the basic type of human activity. Also material are the relations between man and nature, the relations between production and consumption, the initial, primary relations in the sphere of everyday existence, in the family. The concept of material social relations is therefore wider than the concept of economic relations.

The feature common to all material relations is that they exist

independently of social consciousness, that they are primary in comparison with all other forms of social relations. For example, let us take value. Value, according to Marx, is just as objective and material as the thing produced, the use value. At the same time value is not something substantial that can be perceived by the senses. Value is the objective material *relationship* between producers of goods. This means that materiality in the social sense must not be fully identified with materiality in the sense of something substantial, tangible. Of course, society cannot exist without the material, substantial embodiment of the achievements of human labour. The instruments of labour, buildings, ploughed fields, parks, canals, are all the creation of human hands, the materialisation of man's activity and ideas. But these are not the only elements that constitute "social matter", the objective basis of all social relations. This basis is formed by material social relations, that is, the relations that arise between people in the process of the production and reproduction of their immediate life.

The superstructural relations, that is, secondary relations, derived from material relations, may be grouped under the general heading of *ideological relations*—political, legal, moral, and so on. The specific feature of these relations is that they arise only after preliminary passage through the social consciousness. For example, political relations are formed on the basis of the economic relations and interests of various classes but in accordance with the political ideology of these classes, that is to say, their awareness of their common class interests and aims.

Now that we have drawn this distinction between material and ideological relations we can attempt to define the concepts characterising the structure and specific quality of each social-economic formation—*basis* and *superstructure.*

The basis is the economic structure of society, the sum-total of the production relations of the given society. The concept of basis expresses the social function of the production relations as the economic basis of social life.

The *superstructure* comprises three intrinsically connected groups of phenomena. First, social ideas, moods, social feelings, that is, ideology and social psychology. Second, various organisations and institutions—the state, courts, church, and so on. Third, superstructural (ideological) relations. Consequently, the superstructure is *the sum-total of social ideas, institutions and relations arising on a given economic basis.*

Historical materialist methodology begins with recognition of the priority and determining role of the basis in relation to superstructure, with the fact that every social-economic formation has its own

basis and corresponding superstructure. So both the superstructure and the basis have a historically concrete character.

Depending on what kind of economic basis a society may have, its systems of political, legal, religious and philosophical views will correspond to that basis, as will the corresponding relations and institutions of the society. A common feature of the economic structure of all class-divided formations is that they have relations which allow one part of society, the exploiting minority, to appropriate the labour of the rest, the exploited working majority. On the other hand, societies differ in certain essential respects, depending mainly on the specific nature of their basis, that is to say, the prevailing forms of property and forms of human exploitation. For example, the basis of bourgeois society is capitalist ownership of the means of production. It is this that divides society into two basic classes—the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The former is the dominant, exploiting class, while the latter is the oppressed and exploited. The mechanism of capitalist exploitation was revealed by Marx in *Capital*. He showed that all the wealth of the capitalist class rests on the unpaid labour of the workers, which it appropriates in the form of surplus value. Domination in the economic sphere results directly in domination by the bourgeoisie in the political sphere; through its ownership of the means of material production the bourgeoisie takes possession of spiritual, intellectual production as well. The bourgeoisie thus shapes the superstructure, which protects and reinforces the conditions for its domination.

Reflecting the nature of the given basis, the superstructure registers the contradictions that pervade this basis. In a class-divided society the economic contradictions inevitably manifest themselves in contradictions in the superstructure—in contradictions between the state and the revolutionary mood and movement of the masses, between the different political parties, in the ideological struggle between different classes, etc.

The superstructure's dependence on the basis is expressed in the fact that the changes occurring in the economic system of the society in question are reflected in its superstructure. It is characteristic of all class-divided, antagonistic social formations that the elements of the new basis and the corresponding superstructure are conceived already in the framework of the economic and political structures of the old formation. This can be seen from the example of capitalist relations, which were conceived as a special structure within the framework of European feudalism. Their emergence was accompanied by deep-going changes in the intellectual life of society, the appearance of bourgeois ideology and a new culture, which arose in opposition to the feudal superstructure and at that

time were progressive and in some cases even revolutionary. All the anti-feudal social forces (the bourgeoisie, the mass of the working people) joined in the struggle against the privileged sections of feudal society, a struggle that culminated in bourgeois revolutions, which removed the obstacles feudalism had placed in the path of the development of capitalist production and made the bourgeoisie supreme in the sphere of politics and ideology.

Further changes in the superstructure of bourgeois society are connected with the transition from pre-monopoly capitalism to imperialism, and then with the development and deepening of the general crisis of capitalism. Here it should be emphasised that the more capitalism develops the productive forces, the more rapidly its economic system ages and the more reactionary it becomes in the political and ideological respects. Only the opposition of the working masses, the drive of the working class for better conditions, rights and so on, forces the bourgeoisie—if it does not resort to methods of open terror—to mask the reactionary nature of the superstructure, to preserve an appearance of democracy, and so on.

As we have noted, the socialist basis does not arise in the framework of the old society, capitalism, even as an economic structure. Socialist social ownership of the menas of production rules out exploitation and in the framework of the bourgeois economic system the existence of such a form of property is fundamentally impossible. Capitalism merely creates the preconditions (material and spiritual) for socialism, but the socialist structure arises for the first time in the course of the socialist revolution and gradually, as it pushes out other economic structures, becomes the basis of the whole of society. This period, when the socialist basis is becoming established, is known as the transitional period. Its political superstructure is the dictatorship of the proletariat, which is needed for transforming capitalist relations into socialist relations, for crushing the resistance of the deposed classes. In performing its functions the dictatorship of the proletariat has the support of the great mass of the people and is therefore a real democracy for the majority. The power of the working class rests on the socialist structure of the economy that arises immediately after the victory of the revolution and, after socialism is victorious in the economy, culminates in transformation of the superstructure. The state of the working class gradually turns into a socialist state of the whole people.

From now on socialism begins to develop on its own foundation and the new society gradually grows towards economic, political and spiritual maturity. The USSR, for example, has now reached the stage of developed socialism. The achievement of this stage

means that socialism has become an integral social system developing according to a plan and relatively harmoniously, that society has embarked upon achieving the aims of communist construction. The basis of this system is the highly developed social socialist ownership of the means of production, which takes two forms—state property and collective-farm cooperative property. Social ownership makes for relations of cooperation and comradely mutual assistance between members of society and distribution of the material goods in the interests of the working people.

This economic structure has a corresponding superstructure, which comprises a developed and constantly improving system of socialist democracy resting on the institutions of the all-people state and the social organisations of the working people; the totality of political, legal, moral and other ideological social relations linking and uniting people and forming the moral and political unity of socialist society; the scientific Marxist-Leninist ideology, which has won over the minds of the broad masses, and a new psychology reflecting the everyday conditions of their lives. The nucleus of the whole political and ideological system of developed socialism, the guiding force of society, is the Communist Party.

We have now considered the dependence of the superstructure on the basis. This dependence is expressed in the fact that the *economic basis determines the content of the political and ideological superstructure and its make-up.* Changes in the superstructure come as a result of changes in the basis; the elimination of the old basis and the emergence of a new one transform the whole vast superstructure.

At the same time the superstructure is *relatively independent* of its basis.

The social system can never be as rigid and closely determined as a system of mechanical dependencies. The influence of the basis on the superstructure is exerted through the economic and political interests of classes, through an intricate system of mediating links between the economy and various forms of ideology, etc. History is made by people, by social classes; they transform the basis, make revolutions, change the superstructure, pursue policies, create new ideas and wage ideological struggles. For this reason the dependence of the superstructure on the basis should not be understood in an oversimplified way, as an automatically operating mechanism. All changes in the superstructure cannot be attributed solely to economic causes. The interaction of the elements of the superstructure themselves produces results that are sometimes not conditioned economically. It is only *in the final analysis* that the economy determines the social superstructure.

The superstructure is always an *active force* influencing, in order to protect, reinforce and develop, all aspects of social life, including its own basis. In the present age the role of the superstructure as an active factor in history is sharply intensified. There are several reasons for this. The bourgeoisie increasingly places its hopes on the means of ideological and political influence in order to save the obsolete capitalist system. The enhanced activity of the bourgeois superstructure also shows itself in the state's extensive use of regulation of the economy, economic control, in its application of increasingly sophisticated ways of shaping the social consciousness in order to subordinate the masses to the ideological influence of the bourgeoisie, and in attempts to retard the development of the revolutionary working-class and national-liberation movements, to quell the flame of anti-imperialist struggle. Conversely, the socialist superstructure, by reinforcing the socialist basis, serves the constructive aims of building the new society. Socialism, which necessarily presupposes control of production on the scale and in the interests of the whole of society, and implies that social spontaneity is replaced by conscious, planned building up of new social relations, by its very nature conditions and explains the enhanced activity of the socialist superstructure. It also shows that the role of the socialist superstructure in the development of the economic basis differs *qualitatively* from the role played by the bourgeois superstructure.

The basis and the superstructure are the fundamental structural elements of any social-economic formation. They characterise its qualitative uniqueness, the difference between it and other formations. Besides the basis and superstructure a social-economic formation includes other elements of social life (everyday affairs, family relations, and so on), but it is the basis and the superstructure that determine the specific nature of the formation as an integral social organism.

3. Unity and Diversity of the Historical Process

The development and replacement of social-economic formations determine the progressive course of history. One aspect of the mode of production—the productive forces—is the element that ensures continuity in the progressive development of society, determines the direction of this development from lower to higher stages. The other aspect of the mode of production—the production relations—expresses the discontinuity in historical development. Obso-

lete production relations are abolished and replaced by a higher type of production relations and a higher formation. Consequently, the emergence and development of a social-economic formation, the transition to a higher formation are due to the action of the law of correspondence of production relations to the character and level of development of the productive forces. This law manifests itself as a tendency in the development and replacement of formations.

Human beings have always, from the very beginning, lived and developed in society. At first this took place on the small scale of a clan or a tribe. The tribe was simultaneously an ethnic community, whose internal ties were based on blood relationship, a production unit, because tribesmen worked jointly to obtain a livelihood, a form of social organisation and a linguistic unity.

Joint activity (division of labour based merely on age and sex), equality in distribution, strict tribal rules (taboos) and full compliance of the individual to them, and an elaborate system of conditioning of the younger generation for the daily rigorous struggle for survival, characterise the social relations of this period in the life of mankind, which lasted for thousands of years. Here the dependence of the way of life and the whole system of relations on the level of production stands out clearly in all its primeval simplicity. The primitive-communal formation was universal. Nevertheless, slowly, the productive forces developed within its framework. Man's labour became more and more productive, a division of labour developed between land-tilling and stock-raising, between land-tilling and the crafts; exchange—a new form of economic relations—took place between the tribes; the instruments of labour acquired an individual character and it became possible to store products, to redistribute them and to accumulate wealth in the hands of a small part of society. One element of such wealth was man himself because it became economically profitable to exploit labour power. Land cultivation demanded a settled way of life; the development of crafts and the resultant appearance of a considerable variety of different products enabled people to form more extensive communities and create urban settlements. All these circumstances led to the decline of primitive communities and the break-up of their primitive relations of equality, which were superseded by class society with its property inequality and exploitation of man by man.

Class society did not spring up everywhere at once. It first appeared in the valleys of the Yangtze and Hwang Ho, the Nile and the Ganges, the Tigris and the Euphrates. The fertile and easily tillable soil of these areas yielded comparatively good harvests even with the use of only primitive implements of agriculture, and it was

here that the primitive commune first began to decline and slavery appeared.

The slave-owning formation arose where slavery became the basis of social production. It achieved its peak development and acquired classical forms in the Mediterranean (Greece and her colonies, Carthage, Rome and the Roman Empire). Slaves were obtained mainly by conquest, and the mass exploitation of slaves provided wealth for the slave-owners. The whole social organisation and culture of the ancient world developed on the basis of slave labour.

Greece and Rome are usually taken as the "model" by which we judge the whole formation, but this approach is not historically accurate. The development of India, China, and a number of states of the Near East, assumed somewhat different forms. There, slavery did not develop so widely as in Greece and Rome. The system of relatively isolated agricultural communes and a centralised despotic state which, besides its political functions, performed the economic functions of building and maintaining irrigation works on which agriculture depended, and the strict caste barriers that went with this system, created a special type of society based on a mode of production that Karl Marx called the *Asiatic*. This type of society, which existed in Asia and also in some countries of Africa (Egypt) and Latin America (ancient Peru), was a class society divided into exploiters and exploited, but it retained significant traces of communal relations and certain communal forms, and this feature was specifically expressed in the low level of development of private ownership of land.

Definition of the specific features of the Asiatic mode of production and the society based upon it is a matter for concrete historical study. Whether this mode of production constitutes a special social-economic formation or not is a question that is being discussed by historians, but in any case it is clear that this was a specific type of social organisation, extremely sluggish and averse to change and development, which feature sharply distinguishes it from the dynamic (for those days) world of the Mediterranean.

Feudal society is a higher form of economic formation compared with the Asiatic mode of production and slave-owning society. Land cultivation, stock-raising and crafts constitute the material and technical base of this society, but they are developed to a higher level.

Feudalism opened up wider possibilities for the development of the productive forces than had the previous formations. At the same time feudalism is a static society. The routine technology, local isolation and disunity, lack of communication and transport facilities, rigid ordering and control over all forms of activity,

hierarchical divisions of the estates, heavy burden of traditions, strict regulation of spiritual life by the church and domination of religion in the ideological sphere put a brake on all progressive changes. Life revolved in a circle, following a set and unchanging rhythm.

But slowly, deep inside the feudal system there evolved the material preconditions for the breakthrough to new social forms of life. The development of the division of labour, the growth of commodity-money relations, the appearance of new markets, etc., brought into being new productive forces, cooperation and manufactory, which paved the way for the appearance of machine production. The new productive forces demanded new economic and social forms to provide them with scope for development. Thus feudalism was compelled to give way to a new economic formation—capitalist society.

Under capitalism history becomes world history in the full sense of the term, the former isolation both of peoples and territories disappears and for the first time a single world system of economy, a single world market comes into being.

The source and foundation of the development of capitalism are the productive forces connected with machine production. In this period the rate of economic and social development increases sharply, but the development itself proceeds in antagonistic forms because it is based on the capitalist's appropriation of surplus value—the unpaid labour of the workers. Competition, the recessions, inflation and scramble for profit, anarchy of production, periodic crises are the characteristic features of the development of capitalist economy.

In a comparatively short historical period capitalism passes through a number of stages, beginning from the early capitalist accumulation and proceeding through the system of free enterprise to the age of imperialism, of state-monopoly capitalism.

Continuing Marx's analysis of capitalism, Lenin showed that the transition from free competition to monopoly, to the omnipotence of finance capital, which brings under its control the bourgeois state heralds the decline of capitalism as an economic and social system. Imperialism brings about intensification of all the contradictions of capitalism, growth of militarism, political reaction, and the like. All this weakens the system of capitalism and creates preconditions for the socialist revolution.

Subsequent development has confirmaed Lenin's conclusions. In the conditions of the new world crisis there has been a fresh dramatic fall in the rate of growth of industrial production, a falling off of output and business activity, and increases in unemployment

and inflation. According to Edward Kennedy, the United States is currently wallowing in the gravest economic crisis since the 1930s. By early December 1981 there was a total of 8.5 million unemployed in the USA. The real incomes of working people fell sharply. In the past two years alone the real incomes of US working people have decreased by 50 billion dollars. The purchasing power of the average worker has gone back to where it was ten years ago.

In Britain industrial output has fallen compared with 1980. Unemployment has reached the unprecedented figure of three million. The people's living standard is falling.

As was noted at the 37th Congress of the Communist Party of Great Britain (November 1981), Tory economic policy is undermining the country's economic basis, particularly its nationalised industries.

According to some American economists, unemployment in the 24 major capitalist countries of the world will increase over the next few years and by mid-1983 will reach a total of 28 million.

The ruling circles of the United States and Britain have committed themselves to an unrestrained arms race and are sacrificing much of what the working people have won in the sphere of social progress and democracy. The US administration has cut allocations for 105 social programmes by the sum amounting to between 30 and 40 billion dollars. All attempts by the bourgeoisie to regulate the process of production and consumption cannot solve the fundamental contradictions of capitalism between the social character of production and the private form of appropriation, between labour and capital, between the clique of monopolists and the majority of the nation, between the capitalist countries themselves competing on the world market.

Capitalism is the concluding stage of a tremendous period of human history—the period of class-divided society. During this period all major social problems are resolved in the course of the acute struggle of social classes which permeates all class-divided formations for although the classes themselves change, as do the contradictions, the type of historical development remains common to them all, proceeding in various forms of conflict between the economic and political interests of social groups, the class struggle.

Beginning with the cruellest form of human enslavement-slavery—the history of class formations witnessed the gradual modification of forms of exploitation, the replacement of non-economic forms of compulsion by economic forms, the development of material interest in the results of productive activity both among the direct producers and among the owners of the means of production.

A great achievement of this stage of human history was the tremendous development of technology, science and culture, which raised man to undreamt-of heights and created the preconditions for overcoming social antagonisms and moving on to a fundamentally new level of social existence.

Thus the first stage of the historical process—the primitive communal formation—resulted in the emergence of the human race and the creation of the prerequisites for its social development. By building primitive society man broke away from nature, from the "natural state" and was able to stand on his own feet.

The final result of the development of class-divided society is the achievement of a level of development of science and material production that allows man to place the forces of nature at his bidding.

The objective of the new stage in history—the communist formation—is for man to master his own social relations and develop himself comprehensively on the basis of the highest development of material and non-material production, the development of relations of comradely cooperation and communist mutual assistance.

We have examined the general trend of historical development to the extent that it is determined by the laws of movement of material production. But this does not imply that we have explained social development at every point of the historical process. Concrete history is much richer, and is affected by a great number of factors that vary and modify that process. We cannot therefore regard this process as something that proceeds in a single line. Historical development springs from the interaction of many forces and to understand it in its concrete forms we must take into consideration all the essential factors contributing to this interaction. Historical materialism provides the method for studying concrete history because it reveals not only the unity of history and its general direction, but also shows us how to perceive its diversity.

The founders of Marxism gave many a warning against vulgarisation of historical materialism and turning its propositions into a formula to be imposed on concrete history and used as a substitute for studying the concrete facts. Thus Engels wrote: "...According to the materialist conception of history, the *ultimately* determining element in history is the production and reproduction of real life. More than this neither Marx nor I have ever asserted. Hence if somebody twists this into saying that the economic element is the *only* determining one, he transforms that proposition into a meaningless, abstract, senseless phrase."[1] Engels

[1] F. Engels to J. Bloch in Königsberg. London, September 21 [22], 1890, in: K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 487.

goes on to say that various elements in the superstructure, ideology and so on, influence the course of development. If we disregard this historical interaction and fail to see the accidents through whose multitudes economic necessity forces its way, "...the application of the theory to any period of history would be easier than the solution of a simple equation of the first degree".[1]

All kinds of causes diversify the general course of world history. We have already mentioned the influence on society of geographical conditions, which, particularly in the earlier stages of social development, was one of the essential factors determining the uneven course of world history, the advance of some and the backwardness of other peoples. Thanks to its geographical position every people lives in a certain specific historical environment and feels its effects. Nor must we desregard the influence on the course of history of such secondary factors, compared with economics, as the state, the specific character of culture, traditions, ideology, social psychology, etc.

The influence of one people on another is also an important factor in history. It has occurred in all kinds of forms, from wars and conquests to trade and cultural exchange. It may take place in all spheres of social life, from economics to ideology.

The uniqueness of individual countries cannot be understood without taking into consideration the unevenness of world historical development. Some peoples forge ahead, others lag behind; for various concrete reasons some are able to leapfrog over whole social-economic formations. So, in every period throughout written history there existed not just one formation, but peoples at various stages of social development and there were complex interrelations between them. This means that we do not find the same sequence of formations in the history of all peoples. Thus, among the Slavs and the Germanic peoples inhabiting Central and Eastern Europe the disintegration of the pre-class system occurred at the time when the slave-owning formation (Ancient Rome) had exhausted itself and was in a state of decline; for this reason the slave structure that had begun to take shape in Central and Eastern Europe did not develop into a formation and the peoples there passed straight from the tribal system to feudalism.

The character of the mutual influence exercised by peoples that are at different stages of historical development depends on the nature of their social systems. Thus it was in the nature of capitalism that capitalist Europe should have used its technical superiority to enslave the peoples of other continents and subject them to

[1] Ibid.

colonial oppression. The development of these peoples was not only held up by colonialism; in many cases they were actually thrown back both in their economic and cultural development.

The present epoch, when the capitalist formation is in a state of crisis and decline and is being superseded in one country after another by the socialist system, offers many peoples who have fallen behind in their social and economic development the possibility of passing over the stage of capitalism and taking the road that leads to socialism.

Socialist society has worked out an entirely different type of relations between peoples as compared with capitalism. It does everything to create actual equality between nations and to accelerate the economic and cultural advance of formerly backward peoples. How will they develop in future? This depends not only on what part is played by the working people in these countries, by the progressive anti-capitalist, anti-colonialist social forces, but also on the struggle and competition between the two world systems, socialist and capitalist, on how the socialist system demonstrates its superiority over capitalism and exerts its active economic, social, political, cultural and spiritual influence on the developing countries.

In a brief historical period the USSR and the developing countries have established an effective economic exchange on the basis of long-term interstate agreements. The number of countries involved has increased from 14 in 1960 to 40 in 1970, and 64 in 1981. The CMEA countries give all-round economic and technical assistance to 90 independent states of Asia, Africa and Latin America. So far 3,157 of the 4,658 industrial and other installations envisaged under these programmes have been put into operation. The CMEA countries have regular trade links with more than 100 developing countries and trade with them in 1979 was worth 20,000 million roubles.

While recognising the progressive character of social development, the replacement of lower social formations by higher formations, historical materialism does not by any means regard this as a predetermined process ruling out the diversity of history.

But diverse though the history of various peoples may be there are in every historical period certain leading trends of social development. In defining a period of world history according to its leading trends we use the concept of *historical epoch*. For example, we speak of the epoch of slave society or the epoch of feudalism relating them to the time when these formations were dominant. In our own day vestiges of feudalism are still to be found in certain countries but it would be absurd to speak of the present day as the

"epoch of feudalism".

The concept of the epoch may be associated with definite stages of the leading formation. Thus, for example, we distinguish between the epoch of pre-monopoly capitalism and the epoch of imperialism as qualitatively different from one another.

To single out the leading trend in an epoch we must, as Lenin said, establish what class plays the central role in the epoch and determines its main content, the main direction of its development, its main features.

Unlike the concept of the social-economic formation, which characterises a certain stage in the development of society, the concept of the historical epoch is more concrete, expresses the diversity of processes occurring at a given time in a given stage of history. In one and the same epoch in various parts of the world there have existed various formations. For example, alongside the peoples of Greece and Rome who lived in slave-owning society there lived other peoples who were still at the stage of the primitive communal system; alongside the capitalism that had established itself in Europe and North America there still remained feudal and pre-feudal relations in certain other countries. The concept of the historical epoch embraces both the typical and the non-typical for any given period of history. In each epoch, Lenin explained, there may be and will be separate, partial movements forward or backward, there may be various deviations from the average type and rates of movement.

Finally, the concept of the epoch may be associated with the transition from one social-economic formation to another, when mankind is going through a transitional period, when tremendous changes are occurring in its life. Thus the different periods of transition from feudalism to capitalism are characterised as the epoch of the Renaissance, or the epoch of bourgeois revolutions.

Regarded from the standpoint of world history, our own time is also a transitional epoch—the epoch of transition from capitalism to communism. This transition is the leading trend of contemporary social development, reflecting the deep crisis of the whole system of capitalism, the formation and development of the new communist society. At the same time we must not forget that today there exist peoples which are at various other stages of social development. This gives rise to a tremendous diversity of social problems. They can be fundamentally solved only on the road of socialism and communism, which will raise the peoples to a higher stage of social progress. The transition to socialism on a world scale has matured as a historical necessity and it forms the basic content of the present epoch.

Chapter XII

CLASSES AND CLASS STRUGGLE

Unlike the general laws of development applicable to all social-economic formations, class struggle is a law of development of only some of these formations. Mankind progresses from the primitive communal system, which knew no class division, through the various class formations to the communist system, in which class distinctions will disappear forever. Why do classes exist at certain stages in the development of society? What are classes? What place do class relations occupy in society's life?

The correct answer supplies the key to our understanding of the essence of such important social phenomena of the modern world as the state, political relations and ideological life. The class approach to the analysis of the life of any society divided into classes is one of the fundamental methodological principles of Marxism. Explaining the significance of this principle, Lenin wrote: "People always have been the foolish victims of deception and self-deception in politics, and they always will be until they have learnt to seek out the *interests* of some class or other behind all moral, religious, political and social phrases, declarations and promises."[1]

1. Origin and Essence of Classes

Classes are large groups of people into which society is divided. But there are many other large groups in society, divided on principles different from those which divide classes. There are age groups, for instance (young and old generations), groups based on sex, race, nationality, profession, and so on. Some of these divisions have natural causes (age, sex and race), while others are social in origin. The natural differences between people do not in themselves cause social distinctions and only under certain social circumstances may be connected with social inequality. Racial inequality is historical, not natural, in origin. Similarly the social inequality of

[1] V. I. Lenin, *The Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism*, Vol. 19 , p. 28.

the sexes is due not to natural but historical causes. At the early, matriarchal stages of history woman held an honoured place in society, which she subsequently lost owing to her changed role in production.

Class divisions in general usually have nothing to do with natural differences; they exist within one and the same race, one and the same ethnic group, and so on.

Some bourgeois sociologists seek the causes of the division of society into classes in political factors, in coercion, for instance, in the subjugation of some people or peoples by others. Of course, the transition from classless to class society did not occur without coercion. But coercion only accelerated and deepened social inequality; it was not its cause. Violence does not explain the origin of classes any more than robbery explains the origin of private ownership of the means of production. Robbery may result in the passing of some property from one owner to another, but it cannot create private property as such. The division of society into classes is due to economic causes; it existed, for example, even in places such as ancient Athens, where no conquest had taken place.

Its source is the division of labour within society, which presupposes the separation of producers engaged in various forms of production and the exchange between them of the products of their labour. First, stock-raising and land-tilling form special branches of labour, then the crafts break away from land-tilling and finally mental work is separated from manual labour. The social division of labour and exhange brings in its train private ownership of the means of production, which supersedes the previous communal form of property and gives rise to social groups that have unequal standing in social production—classes. Society is divided into rich and poor, exploiters and exploited, and a state of inequality reigns.

As Engels puts it, "these warring classes of society are always the products of the modes of production and of exchange—in a word, of the *economic* conditions of their time..."[1]

What are social classes?

Classes are groups of people which differ from each other primarily *by their place in a historically definite system of production.* This means that every class must be regarded in connection with the mode of production by which it is engendered, and that each antagonistic mode of production creates its own specific division of society into classes (slave owners and slaves, feudal lords and serfs, capitalists and proletarians).

Within every system of production classes occupy different or

[1] F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p. 37.

even diametrically opposed positions, this being determined by *their relationship to the means of production.* This relationship also determines *their role in the social organisation of labour.* Classes perform various functions in social production: in an antagonistic society some of them manage production, control the economy and all social affairs and are engaged predominantly in mental work, while others bear the whole burden of compulsory, arduous physical labour.

As social production and the whole life of society grows more complex various functions of administration become necessary. In the countries of the Ancient Orient, for example, large-scale irrigation works demanded a kind of centralised administration that was not needed in small individual farming. The large-scale machine production of today would be unthinkable without organising activity, without management of production in all fields. In a class society the control of social production is usually in the hands of the class that owns the means of production. When certain production relations begin to hold up the development of the productive forces the role of the ruling class in the social organisation of labour also changes; it loses its organising function in production and declines into a parasitic growth on the body of society. This happened with the landowning aristocracy in its time, and the same thing is happening today to the bourgeoisie (it is relinquishing its organising functions to the managers, to the upper crust of the technical intelligentsia, etc.).

Classes also differ from one another *according to the size and source of their social income.*

This distinction between classes is undoubtedly of great importance, but it is still not the defining factor. We can see this quite easily if we ask ourselves the question: why do various sources of income exist and consequently various conditions for the existence of classes? The chief reason lies in their position in the system of social production. At first sight it may appear, as Marx said, that a class is formed by people having common sources of income. But this view does not go to the bottom of class relationships; what it assumes to be the main and determining relationships are, in fact, a form of distribution that depends on the relations of production. If we consider only the sources and sizes of income we cannot correctly define classes and distinguish them from the multiple social strata and groups that also may receive their income from various sources. Under capitalism, for instance, civil servants receiving their salaries from the state and many doctors whose bills are paid by private patients have different sources of income. But does this give grounds for treating them as special classes?

All the attributes of classes must be considered together in their organic unity. It was Lenin who gave us a fully integrated, consistently scientific definition of classes: "Classes are large groups of people differing from each other by the place they occupy in a historically determined system of social production, by their relation (in most cases fixed and formulated in law) to the means of production, by their role in the social organisation of labour, and, consequently, by the dimensions of the share of social wealth of which they dispose and the mode of acquiring it. Classes are groups of people one of which can appropriate the labour of another owing to the different places they occupy in a definite system of social economy."[1]

Class divisions run right through social life from top to bottom, affecting the whole system of social relations. These relations are divided into the material and the ideological. But what kind of relations become established between classes—material or ideological? The answer is both. Classes are connected by certain economic relations which enable the exploiting classes to appropriate the labour of the exploited. The sum-total of these relations forms the class structure of society and constitutes the material, economic basis of the class struggle. The relations between classes, however, are not confined to the economic field; they acquire their most concentrated expression in political life. Finally, the relations between classes, the class struggle, are revealed in the sphere of ideology, in the spiritual life of society.

Besides class distinctions in society, there are other social distinctions, such as the distinctions between town and country, that is, in the final analysis between the population engaged in industrial and agricultural work, and also the distinctions between people engaged in physical and mental labour.

The division between town and country splits the whole population into two parts, one living in the town, the other in the country. This division has unique features in every class formation. For example, in feudal society the classes of peasants and the feudal lords were concentrated mainly in the villages, whereas the towns were mainly the centres of the artisans, the traders, the emerging bourgeoisie. In capitalist society all social sections are represented, although to a different degree, both in the town and in the village. Hence the division of the bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie into urban and rural, the division of the working class into the urban and rural proletariat, and so on.

Group distinctions expressing the existence of smaller groups

[1] V. I. Lenin, *A Great Beginning*, Vol. 29, p. 421.

within classes are also considered social distinctions. For example, the bourgeoisie itself is divided into small, medium and big capitalists depending on the amount of means of production they own.

We must also take into consideration the division of the bourgeoisie into monopolistic and non-monopolistic and note those groups among the monopolists that are directly connected with the war industry, with militarisation of the economy. These are the most aggressive section of the bourgeoisie, which quite often has a decisive influence on the policies of imperialist states.

There may exist in society more or less significant layers of people that do not belong to any definite class, and also the declassed people, who have lost their connection with their own class (such, for example, is the lumpenproletariat under capitalism, which consists of people—beggars, prostitutes, thieves, etc., who have no definite occupation and have sunk to the lower depths of society).

Among all the various social distinctions the main are class distinctions. First, they spring from the deepest foundations of society, that is, directly from the relation of people to the means of production, from the essence of the production relations, which determine all other social relations. Second, classes are the most powerful and usually the most numerous social groups, whose interrelations and struggle exert a decisive influence on the history of society, on its entire social, political and ideological life.

Bourgeois sociologists often attempt to dissolve the concept of "class" into the more general concept of "social group", to replace the division of capitalist society into classes by a division into social layers, "strata" (such terms as "strata" and "stratification", borrowed from geology to denote the division of society into various layers, usually imply a certain hierarchy). All kinds of criteria are used to determine the composition of the various strata, such as occupation, wealth, education, place of residence and so on, but no emphasis is placed on the main and decisive factor—the relationship to the means of production.

Marxists do not deny the existence in contemporary society of various social strata and groups, various political, economic and cultural organisations. But, first, it is a mistake to confuse groups of people that have formed objectively, such as classes, nations and so on, with organisations created for certain purposes (cultural, political, etc.). And second, the true social significance of any groups may be revealed only in so far as we establish their place in the class structure of society and their role in the class struggle.

2. Social Structure and How It Changes

The sum-total of classes, social layers and groups, the system of their relationship form the social structure of society.

When one mode of production is replaced by another the social structure is changed with the result that certain classes are superseded by others.

In slave-owning and also feudal societies the social structure takes unique forms. In a number of Oriental countries society was divided into castes, isolated groups of people connected by the unity of an inherited profession. In other slave-owning societies (Ancient Greece, Rome, etc.) and also in feudal society class distinctions were consolidated by the legal power of the state into a division of the population into estates. The law laid down for every estate a special position in the state, and certain rights and obligations. The estates were formed on the basis of class division but did not entirely correspond to it since they introduced an element of the hierarchy of power and legal privilege.[1]

The capitalist mode of production simplified the class division of society and, at any rate, in principle, abolished the hierarchical privileges. Under capitalism the direct producers, the workers, are legally free, but they are deprived of the ownership of the means of production and are economically dependent on the capitalists. For this reason Marx and Engels called the capitalist mode of exploitation a system of wage slavery.

Thus the antagonistic modes of production bring about various modes of exploitation and at the same time various divisions of society into classes.

The *basic classes* in antagonistic, class-divided society are the classes which are engendered by the prevailing mode of production and without which such a mode would be inconceivable. The basic contradiction of the mode of production is expressed in the interrelationship and struggle between these classes.

Besides the basic classes the social structure usually comprises *non-basic* or *transitional classes* connected with the survival of parts of previous modes of production or the existence of embryos

[1] In Ancient Rome the population was divided into patricians and plebeians, who in their turn were subdivided into several grades according to their ownership of property. In feudal Europe the highest estates were the priests and aristocracy, who unlike the third, lowest estate (merchants, artisans, peasants, etc.) enjoyed certain privileges; they were freed from paying tribute, were exempt from physical punishment, could not be judged except by a court of their own estate and had the right to own land and the serfs who were bound to it.

of a new mode of production in the form of special economic structures. Consequently these are either old or new classes involving either obsolete or newly emerging forms of the economy.

There existed in slave societies, for instance, small free peasant farmers and also craftsmen. In feudal society, as the towns developed there arose new social strata comprising craftsmen organised in guilds and corporations, merchants, and so on. Big landowners employing both capitalist and pre-capitalist modes of exploiting the peasants continued to exist for a long time in capitalist society, and in countries where significant traces of feudalism still remain they exist to this day as one of the non-basic classes.

In most capitalist countries there is the non-basic class of the petty bourgeoisie comprising farmers, craftsmen, traders and other small property owners— a numerically significant section of society which plays a considerable part in the political struggle. Economically, they hold an intermediate position between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The fact that they are owners of private property brings them closer to the bourgeoisie (although unlike the unearned private capitalist property theirs is usually earned property, based on personal labour); but they are also linked with the proletariat by being workers themselves and experiencing the oppression of capital.

The development of production alters the status and numbers of classes. In the middle of the 19th century the bourgeoisie was rather numerous because the instruments of labour were owned mainly by medium and small capitalists. In England this class constituted eight per cent of the able-bodied population; in other countries the proportion was even larger, while the army of hired labour accounted for only half of the able-bodied population. The development of monopoly capitalism, the fusion of the monopolies with the state and the scientific and technological revolution that began in the middle of the 20th century have brought about considerable changes in the capitalist mode of production. There has been an unprecedented concentration of production and centralisation of capital, particularly since the Second World War. All this has had the effect of building into the capitalist class a powerful layer of monopolistic bourgeoisie. The number of the bourgeoisie in relation to the population has decreased owing to the monopolies crushing many small and medium-size capitalists. It now numbers between one and four per cent of the able-bodied population in the highly developed capitalist countries. At the same time the power and wealth of the monopoly bourgeoisie in these countries have multiplied.

The army of hired labour confronting capital has grown con-

siderably, its ranks having been swelled mainly by numerical reduction of the petty bourgeoisie in both town and country who have been driven out of business.

As capitalism develops the petty bourgeoisie disintegrates; a small portion of it adds to its wealth and joins the capitalists, while the larger part goes bankrupt and assumes the position of either economically dependent property-owners or semi-proletarians and proletarians. This is a regular process based on the advantages of large-scale production, on the law of the concentration and centralisation of capital discovered by Marx.

But this process does not entirely oust the small producers. Of course, technical progress in capitalist society does drive the small producers out of business. They cannot stand the pace, cannot keep on replacing old equipment with new. But it is not to the advantage of monopoly capital to take over all the functions of production. The monopolies leave a number of such functions to the small businessmen.

Marxists have never claimed that the trend towards proletarianisation of the middle strata must lead to their complete disappearance. As Lenin observed, the development of capitalist production follows a contradictory course: "A number of new 'middle strata' are inevitably brought into existence again and again by capitalism (appendages to the factory, work at home, small workshops scattered all over the country to meet the requirements of big industries, such as the bicycle and automobile industries, etc.). These new small producers are just as inevitably being cast again into the ranks of the proletariat."[1]

The petty bourgeois survives in contemporary developed capitalist countries not because he is "stable" as the reformists aver, but because he is needed by the large-scale capital which opposes him. Taken as a whole, however, the small businessman is being steadily pushed out by monopoly capitalism into the ranks of the proletarians and hired labour in general.

The army of hired labour, "liberated" by capital from any, even small, ownership of the means of production, constitutes in the developed capitalist countries the overwhelming majority of the population. It rose from 66 per cent of the able-bodied population in the economically developed capitalist countries in 1940 to 80 per cent in 1970.

In the past hundred years the numbers and proportion of the basic sections of the urban, industrial proletariat has considerably increased, as against a decrease in the rural proletariat. At the

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Marxism and Revisionism*, Vol. 15, p. 39.

turn of the century there were 29.9 million industrial workers in the United States, Britain, Germany and France, but by the middle of the 20th century the figure had almost doubled to 58.1 million. The army of the working class is now world-wide, with contingents in Europe, America, Asia, Australia and Africa. The working class has become more mature and educated, more conscious and organised and its political role in society has enhanced. The scientific and technological revolutin has altered the composition of the working class, the number of skilled workers having considerably increased as against a decrease in unskilled workers.

The introduction of the assembly line supplemented the ordinary type of factory workers handling all-purpose tools and machines with a great number of specialised workers trained to perform comparatively simple operations on the line. Automation, however, is doing away with the one-skill man and producing a new layer of highly skilled workers servicing, adjusting and repairing automatic lines.

Bourgeois ideologists often assert that in the context of the scientific and technological revolution the proletariat is destined to disappear, first, because of the decrease in the numbers of people engaged in production and the increase in those employed in the service industries, and secondly, because of the increase in intellectuals and white-collar workers in general.

It must be noted first of all, however, that bourgeois sociologists and economists wrongly associate the concept of the "proletarian" exclusively with the manual worker. Actually this concept reflects the *social status* of the working class, and not simply its functions in the labour process. It embraces the workers directly engaged in the production process and those performing various subsidiary functions.

Similarly, the rapid growth of the intelligentsia and white-collar workers, which considerably exceeds that of the able-bodied population as a whole, does not testify to the "deproletarianisation" of the population or to the emergence of a new, "middle class" absorbing the proletariat.

The term "intelligentsia" is generally used to denote the section of people professionally engaged in work of an intellectual nature. It may also include a considerable number of white-collar workers, but not all of them, of course, because many are not employed in intellectual work as such but perform various purely technical functions.

The intelligentsia never has been and never can be a separate class. It is not homogeneous in the class sense because it is formed out of representatives of various classes and serves various classes.

Scientists and engineers form the most rapidly expanding section of the intelligentsia. But a large number of engineers and technicians are acquiring a status close to that of the working class. In the last century the intellectuals and white-collar workers were a comparatively privileged enclave but today they have turned into white-collar proletarians. From the standpoint of working conditions and salary white-collar workers are often not better but worse off than the wage worker. In the United States at the beginning of the 20th century the average salary of office workers in the processing industries was more than 2.3 times the wage of the average manual worker; at present it is only a little more than nine-tenths of that wage. A large proportion of engineers have lost their former supervisory functions which made them what Marx called the industrial commissioned and non-commissioned officers of capital; the rate and rhythm of work of these employees, like those of the workers, are now increasingly determined by the actual technological process.

So the increased proportion of engineers, technicians and white-collar personnel that some sociologists present as the "deproletarianisation" of society actually means that an ever larger part of this stratum is placed by capitalism into living conditions resembling those of industrial workers. This, however, does not provide grounds for classifying all technicians, engineers and other white-collar personnel engaged in production as working class. Marx's concept of the "aggregate workman" is not identical to that of "working class" because it embraces socially differentiated kinds of labour, including that of intellectuals.

A certain part of the intelligentsia employed in the "traditional" professions (doctors, lawyers, artists, etc.) remains close in status to the middle sections of society, and the upper class of the bourgeois intelligentsia (for example, the managers) usually merges with the ruling class.

Thus we see that the class structure of society is remarkably complex, comprising various non-basic classes and intermediate layers besides the basic classes. What is more, the classes are not closed groups of people like the hierarchical estates of feudal times. Individuals are constantly moving from some groups or social strata to others.

Bourgeois sociologists try to present this fluidity in capitalist society as the disappearance of class divisions. Of course, there is far greater social mobility in capitalist conditions than under feudalism with its numerous hierarchical barriers. But class barriers do not disappear under capitalism and class contradictions increase. Whereas in the early stages of the development of capitalism some

members of the nobility, village kulaks (rich farmers), etc., were able to penetrate the ranks of the ruling class, today it is no easier to enter the circle of the monopolists than it was in the age of absolutism for a petty bourgeois to gain admission to the nobility.

Although the class status of certain individuals may change this does not eliminate the distinctions between classes which form the class structure of society. Moreover the changes occurring in the social status of the masses under capitalism, the ruining of small businessmen, the proletarianisation of peasants and craftsmen, the growth of unemployment among the workers only broaden the gap between the basic classes of capitalist society.

3. Class Interests and Class Struggle. Forms of Class Struggle and Organisation

Class struggle has persisted throughout the history of society, ever since the collapse of the primitive commune. "Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes."[1] This is how Marx and Engels characterised the basic forms of the class struggle in the days before capitalism in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. The age of capitalism brought further intensification of the class struggle.

What is it that causes the conflict between classes? Is it historically inevitable? Bourgeois historians and sociologists maintain that it is the result of a "misunderstanding", a "mutual failure of communication" between classes, the misguided policies of the ruling sections of society, of "incitement by evil-minded elements", and so on. Many of them make an appeal for social and moral values capable of uniting the warring classes. But to express hopes that it is possible to unite classes with irreconcilable, antagonistic interests with the help of even the "best" ideas or moral values implies a false, idealist approach to the question.

The class struggle is evoked by the diametrically opposed social positions and contradictory interests of the different classes.

What are *class interests?* What is behind them? It is sometimes asserted that class interest is determined by the consciousness of the members of the given class. This is incorrect. The working class of

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Vol. 6, p. 482.

any given capitalist country may for a certain time not be aware of its fundamental interests and restrict itself to fighting for certain particular interests (for example, for increased wages, shorter working hours, and so on). But this does not mean that its fundamental class interests do not exist.

Class interest is determined not by the consciousness of the class but by its position and role in the system of social production. Since the proletariat is deprived of ownership of the means of production and subjected to capitalist exploitation, it is interested in abolishing capitalism, and thus it is a revolutionary class.

The bourgeoisie and the proletariat are antagonistic classes because their interests are diametrically opposed and irreconcilable. The same was true of the basic classes in the societies that preceded capitalism: slave-owners and slaves, lords and serfs.

There may be antagonistic relations not only between the opposed classes of one social-economic formation but also between the classes of different formations one of which is superseding the other. Such, for example, were the relations between the bourgeoisie and the feudal aristocracy in the period when bourgeois methods of exploitation came into conflict with those of feudalism. But inasmuch as both classes were exploiters they were able to unite. Feudal methods of exploitation merged with bourgeois methods in the economies of several countries, and in the political field the bourgeoisie and the landowners often formed a common front, particularly when faced with a common enemy—the mass of the people led by the proletariat.

Whereas the opposition or divergence of class interests form the basis of the struggle between classes, coincidence of the interests of different classes creates a possibility of their working together. In the situation created by contemporary capitalism there are objective conditions for combined action on the part of the proletariat, the peasantry and the urban petty bourgeoisie, the bulk of the intelligentsia and white-collar workers, against the monopolies. As the most revolutionary, organised and united class, the proletariat is the natural leader of any alliance of these groups.

In the class struggle even radically different social classes, when faced by a common enemy—imperialism, for example—may find that their interests temporarily coincide. Thus, the nation-wide objectives, the struggle for liberation in the dependent countries oppressed by imperialism may provide grounds for combined action on the part of the mass of the working people (working class, peasantry, urban petty bourgeoisie, intelligentsia) and the national bourgeoisie. But in such a situation each class acts according to its own rights, according to its own class interests. This is why Lenin

demanded "a precise analysis of those varied interests of *different* classes that coincide in certain definite, limited common aims".[1]

Bourgeois sociologists, the advocates of reform, and the right-wing socialists, deny the necessity of the class struggle. They assert that the driving force of progress is "class cooperation". *But in point of fact the driving force of development of class-divided societies is the revolutionary struggle between the classes.*

The class struggle exerts a profound influence on the development of the productive forces. One of the reasons for introducing machinery was the desire of the capitalists to break the resistance of the workers, to force them to submit to the compulsory rhythm of factory production. Marx observed that in Britain, "...since 1825, the invention and application of machinery has been simply the result of the war between workers and employers".[2] The workers' resistance prevented the capitalists from multiplying their profits mainly by increasing working hours and forced them to concentrate their efforts on reducing the amount of necessary working time by increasing labour productivity, by employing more efficient machinery.

But the Marxist proposition that the class struggle is the driving force of development of class-divided societies does not imply that it is the prime cause of development of the productive forces. The class structure of society and the class struggle it produces are themselves determined by the development of the productive forces and production relations. The class struggle acts as the driving force of historical development primarily because it is the means by which an obsolete social system is transformed into a new and higher system. The conflict between the new productive forces and the obsolete relations of production finds its expression in an antagonism between classes. This conflict is resolved by a *social revolution, which is a higher manifestation of the class struggle.*

The class struggle acts as the motivator of historical events not only in an epoch of social revolutions but also in so-called peaceful epochs. The reforms, the minor improvements lauded by the reformists are, in fact, a by-product of the revolutionary struggle. The degree of democracy achieved in any country depends decisively on the scope of the revolutionary struggle of the progressive classes. Lenin contrasted the socialist theory of the class struggle as the only real mover of history to the bourgeois theory of cooperation between classes as the driving force of social progress. He wrote:

[1] V. I. Lenin, *On the Question of a Nation-Wide Revolution*, Vol. 12, p. 404.

[2] K. Marx to P. V. Annenkov in Paris. Brussels, December 28 [1846], in: K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 521.

"According to the theory of socialism, i.e., of Marxism ... the real driving force of history is the revolutionary class struggle. According to the theory of bourgeois philosophers, the driving force of progress is the unity of all elements in society who realise the 'imperfections' of certain of its institutions. The first theory is materialist; the second is idealist. The first is revolutionary; the second is reformist. The first serves as the basis for the tactics of the proletariat in modern capitalist countries. The second serves as the basis of the tactics of the bourgeoisie."[1]

The class struggle occurs in various spheres of social life—in the economy, in the social, political and intellectual fields; it may have different degrees of intensity, from passive opposition to a hostile class to active attack on its positions and drastic class clashes; it may be hidden or open, spontaneous or conscious. The substitution of some forms of class struggle for others depends on changes in the situation, on the degree of intensity of the contradictions between the interests of the various classes, on the development of each class.

The forms of class struggle are connected with the forms of class organisation. This comes out very clearly in the class struggle of the proletariat. The proletariat conducts its struggle against capitalism in three main forms: *economic, political,* and *ideolgical.*

The *economic* struggle is, historically, the first form of the class struggle of the proletariat. In all countries the workers' struggle began by their defending their immediate economic interests. They fought for higher wages, reduced working hours, improvement of working conditions, and so on. It was in this struggle that the proletariat's first organisation arose—the trade unions that were to become its school of class struggle. Strikes, partial or general, are a vitally important means of economic struggle.

The economic fight for daily needs is of vital importance to the working class, but it cannot rid the working class of exploitation.

The ideologists of capitalism maintain that the proletariat's class struggle is becoming pointless because its position is gradually improving and the profits of the monopolies are "seeping down" into all strata of society. In fact, however, wage rises are lagging behind rising prices and productivity of labour. A certain rise in the standard of life of some sections of the working people has occurred in a number of capitalist countries mainly owing to the class struggle of the proletariat. Out of the tremendous wealth produced by their hands and brains the proletarians in some capitalist countries have won an improvement in living standards compared with

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Once Again about the Duma Cabinet,* Vol. 11, p. 71.

their life in the 19th century. But we must not forget that even in the richest capitalist country, the United States, millions of working people live on or near the poverty line. What is more the improved standard of living won by some groups of workers in the capitalist countries is reduced to nought by the rising cost of living, by inflation. Wages lag behind the material and cultural needs of the worker and his family which tend to grow with the development of society. It should be borne in mind that the higher standard of life attained in recent decades by some sections of the working people in a small group of developed capitalist countries is built on the intensified exploitation of the working people in these countries, on unequal pay for women and for immigrant workers, and also on imperialism's foreign economic policies aimed at exploiting the developing countries.

Contemporary bourgeois ideologists argue that today the working class of the capitalist countries is "integrated" in capitalist society and "has a stake" in that society because it receives from it some of the good things of life. However, they conceal the fact that all these good things have been produced by the working class itself and that only its persistent struggle has restored to it a part of what was created by its own labour. As in the old days, the worker, whose productivity has now grown so much, does not receive an increasing part of the wealth he creates, is still exploited by capital. This is confirmed by the development of the workers' strike campaign. The total number of strikers in the developed capitalist countries, amounting to 74.5 million between 1919 and 1939, doubled between 1946 and 1959 and quadrupled between 1960 and 1969. In the seventies it exceeded 380 million people.

Significantly, it is the part of the working class concentrated in the main monopolised industries, at the large factories belonging to the monopolies, where wages are higher than in the non-monopoly sector, that displays the greatest activity in the strike campaign. Class conflicts at factories become even more intense with the further advance of the scientific and technological revolution, which in the conditions of capitalism brings much hardship to the worker. Despite its use of the achievements of the scientific and technological revolution capitalism has been unable to get rid of its contradictions and stabilise itself as a system. "To be sure, capitalism has not stopped developing. But it is immersed in what is already the third economic recession in the past ten years.... It is more than obvious that state regulation of the capitalist economy is ineffective."[1]

[1] *Documents and Resolutions. The 26th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, pp. 26, 27.

The economic struggle not only counteracts the process of impoverishment of the proletariat: it also gives it the organisation to deal with wider revolutionary tasks. If the workers did not fight the rapacity of capital they would be degraded, as Marx put it, to one level mass of broken wretches past salvation. "By cowardly giving way in their everyday conflict with capital, they would certainly disqualify themselves for the initiating of any larger movement".[1]

Significant though it may be, the economic struggle is not in itself enough to do away with capitalist exploitation. To achieve this there must be *political* struggle on the part of the proletariat.

Even the struggle for partial economic demands, for example, for reduction of working hours, for a guaranteed minimum wage, for social security (particularly in the form of pensions, etc.) inspires the proletariat to undertake political action. In present-day conditions the defence of the working people's economic interests depends to a great extent on successful struggle against militarism and the arms race. So the strike campaign often acquires political significance and is closely linked with the fight against the imperialist preparations for a new war, with the fight for democracy and national independence.

The political struggle exerts a powerful influence on the struggle in the economic field. It is characteristic that with the general fight against socialism on their hands the capitalists, fearing that the class struggle may grow into a mass revolutionary movement, have been compelled to make some concessions to the workers' demands and try to employ better disguised forms of exploitation of the working people. The existence of the world socialist system and the achievements of the socialist countries greatly increase the strength of the proletariat of the capitalist countries.

Political struggle takes many forms ranging from participation in elections to parliaments, local councils and other state organisations to mass demonstrations, from the peaceful use of the parliamentary platform to the revolutionary struggle for power. The chief objective of the proletariat's political struggle is to overthrow the power of the capitalist class and establish the power of the working class, and, once this power has been won, to consolidate it as an instrument for building socialist society.

Historically, political struggle developed after the economic struggle, but it ranks first in importance because it is a higher form of class struggle. The reasons for this are as follows:

[1] K. Marx, *Wages, Price and Profit*, in: K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 75.

1. In the economic struggle action against the exploiters may be confined to separate contingents of the working class (for example, the workers of an individual factory), whereas in the political struggle the workers and capitalists are ranged against each other as classes each in its entirety.

2. In the economic struggle the workers defend their own immediate, daily interests, sometimes the interests of separate groups of the working class, but in the political struggle they are defending their own fundamental, general class interests.

3. In the economic struggle, if it is conducted separately from the political struggle, the workers acquire only a trade-union type of consciousness, that is, an understanding of their own narrow professional interests; in the political struggle, led by a Marxist party, the working class evolves a truly class, proletarian socialist consciousness, an understanding of its fundamental general class interests, of its historic mission and revolutionary objectives.

4. The economic struggle provides the proletariat with the organisation it needs in the form of trade unions; the political struggle demands the creation of a Marxist political party, the highest form of class organisation of the proletariat.

The *ideological* struggle is also a highly important form of the class struggle of the proletariat. To rouse the working class for a broad economic and particularly political struggle one must make it aware of its fundamental class interests. The theory of Marxism-Leninism, scientific socialism, gives the working class this awareness. It reveals the laws of social development, the laws of the development of capitalism and shows the working class the ways and means of struggle for freedom from exploitation, for socialism. The theoretical, ideological struggle of the working class, of its parties, is aimed at freeing the workers' minds from bourgeois ideas and prejudices. The introduction of Marxist socialist ideology into the spontaneous working-class movement raises it to a higher level of development. So the ideological form of the class struggle is just as essential for final victory of the proletariat as its other forms.

In the course of this struggle classes acquire political and ideological shape. Their complex path of development transforms them from a passive object of history to its conscious and active subject, its makers. From being classes "in themselves" they become classes "for themselves".[1] "Economic conditions," wrote Marx, "had

[1] Admittedly, not all classes undergo this transformation. The ruling classes usually become aware of their fundamental interests before the oppressed classes. Some of the oppressed classes (slaves, for example) cannot grasp their

first transformed the mass of the people of the country into workers. The domination of capital has created for this mass a common situation, common interests. This mass is thus already a class as against capital, but not yet for itself. In the struggle ... this mass becomes united and constitutes itself as a class for itself."[1]

In the formation of a class as an actively operating subject, as a class "for itself", an important role is played by the emergence of the corresponding political organisations, particularly political parties.

The class struggle finds its most definite form of expression in the struggle of political parties which express the interests of classes and lead their struggle. Parties differ from classes in that they (1) never embrace the whole of class but represent only part of it, and (2) they are the result of the conscious joining together of the advanced, most active representatives of the given class in the name of definite political ideas and aims, whereas classes themselves arise spontaneously as a result of the economic development of society. The party therefore arises after the class has taken shape.

Bourgeois ideologists, and also reformists and revisionists try to obscure the connection between parties and classes. Many bourgeois sociologists follow the German sociologist Max Weber in dividing society into three independent orders: economic, social and political. Classes are placed in the economic order; the so-called status groups, which are distinguished by the degree of respect they command in society, make up the social order. This approach to the question offers the possibility of isolating parties from classes.

Of course, the division of society into parties does not usually coincide with the division into classes. A class is quite often represented not by one but by several parties expressing, along with the general class interests, the interests of separate groups within the class. The contradictions between the bourgeois parties are often somewhat superficial in character but sometimes they reflect deeper differences between the various factions within classes.

The class struggle reveals the true face of each party. "The division of any society into different political parties," Lenin wrote, "is revealed most clearly of all in times of profound crises shaking the whole country ... all phrase-mongering, all that is petty and extraneous, is brushed aside by the gravity of the struggle; the parties strain every nerve and appeal to the *masses*, and the masses,

fundamental interests at all or can only realise them when they embark on the road of struggle under the leadership of a more developed class (this is the case, for instance, with the peasantry).

[1] K. Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy*, Vol. 6, p. 211.

guided by their unerring instinct and enlightened by the experience of an open struggle, follow the parties that represent the interests of a particular class."[1]

The party of the working class is the advanced, politically organised and active part of the working class, its vanguard. The majority of workers are too much overburdened by exploitation to be able in the conditions of capitalism to rise to the level of class consciousness that distinguishes the vanguard; even a trade union, a simpler kind of organisation more easily understood by the less developed sections of the workers, cannot take in the whole proletariat. No one, therefore, should cherish the illusion that in capitalist conditions (or even in the conditions of the transition from capitalism to communism) the dividing line between the vanguard of the working class and the whole class can automatically disappear. This line will be erased only when communism wins final victory.

All other organisations of the proletariat—trade unions, cultural and educational associations, etc.—serve as necessary means in the class struggle but they cannot solve the fundamental problem, the problem of abolishing the capitalist system and carrying out a socialist revolution. Only a Marxist-Leninist party, which is the highest form of class political organisation of the proletariat, is capable of uniting the activities of all proletarian organisations and guiding them to the one goal of socialist revolution.

But there are opportunist parties as well as revolutionary parties of the working class in many capitalist countries. *Opportunism* and *revisionism* are not accidental phenomena in the working-class movement. They have their social roots; they are a result of the corrupting influence of capitalism, of bourgeois pressure on the unstable sections of the workers.

The working class is not homogeneous; it includes various interlayers, such as recent arrivals from the petty bourgeoisie, and the upper crust of highly paid workers, the working-class aristocracy. In the conditions of imperialism the bourgeoisie of the developed capitalist countries is able to bribe the upper sections of the proletariat out of the profits obtained by plundering the colonies and economically dependent countries and by fixing high monopoly prices. It is this that feeds and supports opportunism in the working-class movement. The corruption of part of the proletariat can be paid for not only out of colonial super-profits but also out of the super-profits obtained by monopoly capitalism through its appropriation of the fruits of the scientific and technological revolution, the achievements of science and technology.

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Political Parties in Russia*, Vol. 18, p. 45.

The heterogeneous nature of the working class leads inevitably to divergence of views and aspirations among its different sections, and every turn in the development of the class struggle may intensify these divergences, evoking both ultra-"left" and right-wing deviations and trends. The dialectics of the revolutionary movement is such that its very growth, the involvement of the wider sections of the working class and particularly other (for example, petty bourgeois) social strata, which is in itself a positive phenomenon, may at the same time help to cultivate both right-wing and "left" opportunism. Opportunism, internal division in the working class and dissension between workers of different nationality are used by the bourgeoisie as the chief means of weakening the working-class movement. But although the bourgeoisie in certain countries may temporarily be able to slow down the development of the class struggle of the proletariat, it has no power to stop it.

The class struggle is a regular feature of developed class societies and their driving force. This law discovered by Marx and Engels consists in the fact that "all historical struggles, whether they proceed in the political, religious, philosophical or some other ideological domain, are in fact only the more or less clear expression of struggles of social classes, and that the existence of these classes and thereby the collisions, too, between these classes are in turn conditioned by the degree of development of their economic position, by the mode of their production and of their exchange determined by it".[1]

4. Historical Necessity to Abolish Classes

The ultimate goal of the class struggle waged by the proletariat is to abolish capitalist society with its inevitable antagonism between classes, and to create the classless communist society.

Awareness of the injustice of a society divided into antagonistic classes and calls for its abolition are to be found at the very dawn of capitalism. But at that time they ran counter to the needs of economic progress. The economic conditions for the abolition of classes had not yet matured.

Only in the epoch of developed capitalism does the mighty growth of the productive forces create conditions in which "the abolition of class distinctions can be a real progress, can be lasting without bringing about stagnation or even decline in the mode of

[1] K. Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, in: K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, pp. 394-95.

social production".[1] In such a situation the desire of the oppressed and exploited masses to destroy classes and social distinctions, to abolish class inequality, coincides with the needs of economic progress, with objective necessity.

The development of contemporary capitalist society also creates the material pre-conditions for abolition of the old social forms of division of labour between town and country, between people of mental and physical labour; it makes this abolition necessary. The abolition of the antithesis, and subsequently of all essential differences between town and country "is not merely possible. It has become a direct necessity of industrial production itself, just as it has become a necessity of agricultural production".[2] The abolition of the antithesis and subsequently of all essential differences between mental and physical labour is in keeping with the needs of the development of production and man. It secures free and all-round development not only for the minority but for all members of society, and this tremendously accelerates social progress.

Economic advance has not only necessitated the destruction of classes; it has also given birth to the social force that is capable of carrying out this historic task. That force is the modern proletariat.

The proletariat is the most revolutionary class not because it is the poorest and suffers most. Capitalism condemns to beggary and hardship millions of needy peasants and urban poor, many thousands of lumpenproletarians who often suffer even more than the proletarians, but this does not make them any more revolutionary. The consistent revolutionary drive of the proletariat is determined not only by the fact that it is an exploited class interested in overthrowing capitalism, but also by the fact that of all the oppressed and exploited groups of the working people it alone is the vehicle of the new, higher, that is to say, socialist, mode of production.

What is more, the proletariat is the most organised and conscious class. Because it is connected with large-scale production, the proletariat, as Lenin says, "economically dominates the centre and nerve of the entire economic system of capitalism".[3] It is united and trained in discipline and organisation by the very conditions of labour in large-scale production and therefore is more capable than any other class of working people of undertaking united, conscious action. In contrast to the revolutionary classes before it, which were

[1] F. Engels, "On Social Relations in Russia", in: K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 387.

[2] F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p. 360.

[3] V. I. Lenin, *The Constituent Assembly Elections and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat*, Vol. 30, p. 274.

not always able to unite even within the bounds of one nationality, the proletariat wages the class struggle against capitalism on an international scale. *Internationalism* is an inseparable and essential feature of the proletariat's class struggle.

Marxists single out the proletariat as the sole consistently revolutionary class not in order to oppose it to the rest of the working people but to reveal its role as the leader of all working people. Marx flatly rejected the assertion of the German socialist Ferdinand Lassalle that in relation to the proletariat all other classes are "a solid reactionary mass". Lassalle's precept is incorrect and politically harmful; it condemns the proletariat to isolation. In order to defeat capital the proletariat must win over the broad masses of the working people, above all the peasantry and also the working intelligentsia, the white-collar workers. Only with their support can the proletariat successfully carry out its historic mission.

The scientific and technological revolution considerably extends the range of the social conflicts into which various groups of working people in capitalist society are drawn. Now these groups comprise not only workers thrown out of their jobs by automation or deprived of their skills and compelled to switch to low-paid occupations. They include also the bankrupt small producers who have to adapt to new proletarian conditions of life as well as many of the rank-and-file office workers and intellectuals whose life is growing more and more difficult and who are becoming ever more keenly aware of the inhuman and anti-popular nature of capitalism. These groups also comprise a considerable section of the young people, who are unable to obtain the education and skills they need in the situation created by the current scientific and technological revolution.

Some of the ultra-"left" theoreticians (Herbert Marcuse, for example) argue that the enhanced activity of these groups of working people means that the working class is losing its revolutionary role. The ultra-"leftists" pin high hopes on the students, whom they present as the most revolutionary force, the modern substitute for the allegedly "conservative" proletariat. The students are indeed capable of great political activity. They hate the despotic, authoritarian bourgeois system in higher education and do not wish to become the servants of business, but they are unstable and come from different classes; they are not one of the productive forces of society and are therefore unable to undertake independently the historic mission of abolishing capitalism, which can be performed only by the organised working class.

The growth of the social activity of several groups of the population in the capitalist countries today testifies not to the "loss" by

the working class of its world-wide, historic role but to the fact that in these countries there are considerably wider possibilities for the working class to rally the broad social sections of the population in the struggle against the capitalist monopolies.

The victory of the socialist revolution and the proletariat's conquest of power launches the process of elimination of classes. This is a complex and lengthy process which takes place in two stages: the transitional period from capitalism to socialism, in the course of which the exploiting classes are abolished and the non-proletarian masses of the working people are placed on the road of socialism, and the period of development of socialism and its gradual growing into communism, when the remaining class distinctions are overcome.

The specific forms and time-span needed to carry out these tasks differ from country to country, depending on the social structure that is inherited from the old system. In the more developed countries, where capitalism has simplified the class structure of society, where the polarisation of society into two great classes is expressed more distinctly, the process of the destruction of classes may proceed at a faster rate. On the other hand, in countries where small producers constitute the majority, or a considerable part, of the population, where pre-capitalist social strata continue to exist, this process goes through a number of transitional stages and inevitably becomes more complex and prolonged.

The complete elimination of class distinctions presupposes not only a change in the relations of ownership but also the overcoming of the previous forms of social division of labour, the distinctions between people, based on the part which they play in the organisation of social labour, and also inequality in the distribution of the social wealth. Lenin observed that "in order to abolish classes completely, it is not enough to overthrow the exploiters, the landowners and capitalists, not enough to abolish *their* rights of ownership; it is necessary also to abolish *all* private ownership of the means of production, it is necessary to abolish the distinction between town and country, as well as the distinction between manual workers and brain workers".[1] This is the only way of transition to a society that is *socially homogeneous,* and guarantees complete *social equality.*

This problem is not fully solved in the first phase of communism. Elimination of all the exploiting classes in the transitional period from capitalism to socialism means that the basic sources of social inequality are eliminated. Society is no longer divided into groups

[1] V. I. Lenin, *A Great Beginning,* Vol. 29, p. 421.

of people one of which can, thanks to its position in the system of social economy, appropriate the results of the labour of others. Yet, for a certain period of time there still remain class distinctions in socialist society between the working class and the peasantry, depending on the level of development of the productive forces and production relations in town and country. These distinctions are connected with the existence of the two forms of socialist property: state property, i.e., the property of the whole people; and cooperative, collective-farm property. The fundamental thing here is the uneven degree of socialisation of production, of the development of the productive forces in industry and agriculture.

The classes that continue to exist in socialist society are the workers and the peasants. They are united by the socialist system of economy, by the one type of social ownership of the means of production, and by their work together, and yet they still differ within the framework of a given community by their relationship to the means of production, their role in the social organisation of labour and their means of obtaining their income.

Class distinctions are by no means the only social distinctions that exist under socialism. Besides the differences between the working class and the collective-farm peasantry there are distinctions between the urban and rural population in general (the latter consists not only of collective farmers, but also of workers and employees); distinctions between the people mainly engaged in physical work and those whose occupation is largely intellectual; and finally, distinctions between the sections whose work involves a different content, different skills, different levels of income within the working class, within the peasantry, and within the intelligentsia and office and other workers.

The overcoming of these distinctions is mainly a matter of solving two major social problems: the elimination of the *essential differences* between (1) town and country and between (2) people performing mental and manual labour. It is therefore mainly determined by the development of production and growth of culture.

The workers and peasants are steadily coming closer together through their position in the system of *economic relations,* through their relationship to the means of production, because the two forms of socialist property are also coming closer together. Another thing that is bringing all social groups closer together is the *character of their labour.* On the basis of technological progress agricultural labour is gradually being transformed into a kind of industrial work, and mental and manual labour are steadily beginning to acquire an organic unity in people's production activity. As this process of the evening out of the character of labour proceeds, the

cultural and technical level of the peasants gradually approaches that of the workers and the level of both of these classes moves up to that of the intelligentsia, implying a general cultural upswing of the whole people.

Finally, in the process of advance towards communism on the basis of the growth of productivity of labour and elimination of distinctions in the cultural and technical levels of the working people the preconditions are gradually created for the elimination of distinctions both in the forms of *distribution* of income and also in the *conditions of everyday life of all social groups.*

The experience of the transformation of class relations in the USSR and other socialist countries shows the economic, political and social significance of the overcoming of class antagonisms and class distinctions. The abolition of the ownership of the means of production and of class exploitation brings about the social, economic and moral renovation of society because it puts an end to the longing to accumulate wealth, the power of money, the enmity, selfishness, war, militarism and other evils of class-divided society. In its day the emergence of classes was a progressive phenomenon, but now the abolition of classes is a condition of historical progress. Developed socialism takes a tremendous step forward in solving this problem. Analysing the processes of integration of all classes and social groups thanks to the changes in the character and content of their labour, standards of living and intellectual development that have occurred in Soviet society in recent decades, the 26th Congress of the CPSU reached the conclusion that, "a classless structure of society will take shape mainly within the historical framework of mature socialism."[1]

The leading role in this process belongs to the working class. This is due first to the fact that the working class is directly connected with the highest form of the socialist economy, because it works at enterprises that are the property of the whole people; second, the working class makes up the great bulk of workers in industry, which is the driving force of the whole economy; third, the working class is more organised than any other group of working people. The working class is growing in numbers, comprising now two-thirds of the working population in the USSR. On the basis of the socialist interests and communist ideals of the working class all classes and social groups in Soviet society are coming closer together and acquiring greater conhesion.

The victory of the developed socialist society has given the people socio-political and ideological unity. The relations between

[1] *Documents and Resolutions. The 26th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, p. 69.

the working class and the collective-farm peasantry, and also the relations between these classes and the intelligentsia are not relations of class struggle, but relations of friendship and an inviolable alliance led by the working class.

The elimination of the exploiting classes and the establishment of social, political and ideological unity in society means that the full intensity of the class struggle shifts to the international arena, where the competition between the two systems, socialist and capitalist, is in full swing. The interrelations between the two systems, no matter what form they take, are essentially an arena of class struggle.

Socialism is having an ever increasing influence on human progress. The building of developed socialism in the USSR and the growth in its strength, the successes of socialist construction in the fraternal countries are radically changing the international situation and helping to establish worldwide the principles of peaceful coexistence between countries with different social systems. *Peaceful coexistence is one of the forms of the class struggle between the two systems, socialism and capitalism* in which the main stress is an economic competition. Replying to questions put to him by the West German magazine *Der Spiegel,* Leonid Brezhnev stressed that orientation on long-term prospects in economic relations is also orientation on durable peaceful coexistence, on good-neighbourliness, and while such relations develop, the material structure of peaceful coexistence in Europe will continue to grow stronger and richer.[1]

The results of Brezhnev's visit to the Federal Republic of Germany indicate that certain material factors of detente are still developing, that a decade of detente has not failed to have its mark. The seventies, Brezhnev noted during his visit, "have exerted a profound influence on the consciousness of nations, on people's minds. Detente has shown that peaceful, mutually advantageous cooperation between nations is a real possibility. More, it is a categorical necessity".[2]

Mutually advantageous cooperation between the USSR and the FRG in the economic, industrial, technological and scientific fields continues to develop on a stable and long-term basis, progressively, in an ascending line, and a number of projects extend beyond the 20th century.

So, as Brezhnev said, "there are no grounds for believing that the world has irrevocably embarked on the road leading to disas-

[1] See *Pravda* November 3, 1981.
[2] *Pravda*, November 23, 1981.

ter",[1] every effort must be made to consolidate peace, to restore the climate of detente and confidence. The world socialist system has to prove its superiority over capitalism by achieving higher productivity of labour, a higher material and cultural level for the whole population, and the creation of conditions for the all-round development of personality. Along with this economic contest there is also a political and ideological struggle between the two systems.

Socialist society is a stage in the process of growth into communist society. The elimination of the class divisions is a gradual process which, given correct policy, excludes any class conflicts or clashes. The policy of the CPSU, designed to enhance the influence of the working class in all spheres of social life, strengthen its alliance with the peasantry, and further unite the workers, collective farmers and intellectuals in their joint labour, promotes this objective process. The progressive drawing together of all sections of the people helps society's advance towards communism.

The development of society thus confirms the proposition of Marxism-Leninism that class division is historically transient in character. Class society, which supplanted the primitive communal system several thousand years ago, turns out to be not an eternal form of the life of humanity but only its prehistory, to be followed by a genuinely human history free of all forms of oppression and offering broad opportunities for the full flowering of man's strength and ability.

1 *Pravda*, November 25, 1981.

Chapter XIII

THE HISTORICAL FORMS OF HUMAN COMMUNITY: TRIBE, NATIONALITY, NATION

The mode of production of material goods forms the basis of all social relations. It determines the structure of social relations in general, including the national, ethnic structure of such forms of human community as clans, tribes, nationalities and nations.

1. The Clan and Tribe as Historical Forms of Human Community in Pre-Class Society

In the pre-class period the main forms of ethnic human community were the *clan* and *tribe*. The data gathered by anthropology, ethnography and archeology tell us that the clan or gentile organisation superseded the herd form of life evidently during the upper paleolithic period, when the modern type of man first appeared.

The *clan* may be defined as a primary productive, social and ethnic group of pre-class society possessing a common origin, language, customs, beliefs, and common features of everyday life and culture, a group in which blood as well as production relations play the primary role in the performance of all activities. The clan has its common settlements and grounds for hunting, gathering and other forms of production.

The economic basis of the clan was primitive communal property. The group of people forming the clan ran their economy together on the basis of social ownership and egalitarian distribution of what they produced. Change and development in their economic activity led to modification of the organisational forms of gentile society.

The *tribe* was a larger community than the clan, usually comprising several hundred or several thousand (perhaps even tens of thousands) of people. If well developed it comprised several clans. Every clan remained an independent unit of social production within the tribe, but the tribe brought into being a new form of social property, a new form of social organisation. There was now tribal property as well as the property of the clan. For the most part this was territory (the areas settled by the clans, the hunting grounds and pastures and other lands). This meant that there was

a need for government of the tribe as a whole and hence there appeared chieftains, priests, war-lords and administrative bodies, such as the tribal council and the general assembly of warriors or elders of the tribe.

In its day the clan or tribal form of community was the only possible form in which production, or for that matter primitive society as a whole, could function and develop. Hence the existence of such a form among all peoples at the stage of the primitive communal system, and also its ability to survive for thousands of years.

The clan or tribal community offered scope for the development of economic activity and culture and brought people closer together. It created favourable conditions for the preservation and accumulation of production experience and the rudiments of culture, and for the improvement and perfection of the language. At the same time blood relationships limited the numerical growth of the social groups and hindered communication, particularly people's movements and the development of economic relations.

The force of tradition that facilitated the functioning of the social organism was so great that it prevented any substantial change in the life of the tribe. The growth of contradictions in the clan-tribe organisation ultimately led to the supplanting of this form of community by other forms. Strictly speaking, the formation of tribes had already initiated the splitting up of the united multi-functional community. Inasmuch as the tribe performed only some of the social functions, this was the beginning of the breakaway of the ethnic community from its immediate economic functions. Then came the pair-based family and the tendency to separate family-marital relationships and consanguinity relations from common ethnic relations.

2. The Emergence of Classes and Development of Forms of Human Community. Nationality. Nation

With the beginning of the social division of labour (separation of stock-raising from agriculture, the development of crafts), with the appearance of barter relations and unequal property relations, the clan-tribe organisation was compelled to yield place to a new form of human community. This new form of community was based not on blood relationships but on certain territorial links between people belonging to different tribes who were, however, closely connected with one another by the character of their economic activity, their trade or other economic relations. This new form of

community was the *nationality*.

Formed on the basis of the class production relations that superseded the primitive communal relations, the nationality is a community of people who live on one territory and are bound together by a common language, mentality, cultural features and way of life, as expressed in their customs, morals and traditions. Instead of the primitive communal economy known to the tribal organisation, the economy becomes based on private property, and the private property of exploiters appears and develops. Thus the formation of nationality gradually destroys the direct connection of the economy with the wider form of human community. Because they are more developed communities than tribes, nationalities promote the development of production, accumulation, and exchange of production experience and cultural achievements, the perfection of language and all other forms of human communication, over a relatively wide area, inhabited by tens or hundreds of thousands of people.

But in the course of time even this form of community begins to restrict the development of the production of material goods and exchange, which by now embraces almost every kind of human activity. The patriarchal-subsistence economy gives way to commodity production. Commodity-capitalist relations do away with economic isolation of the different economic regions and strengthen the ties between the people of a given nationality and other nationalities, help to give them a common language, common cultural features, and bring people together in even more stable communities—*nations* "with one government, one code of laws, one national class-interest, one frontier and one customs-tariff".[1]

Sometimes for various reasons the centralised state is formed before all the nationalities living on the given territory can be absorbed into the nation. In such cases a multi-national state is formed with a privileged position for one or several nations which, having evolved before the others, become the driving force in the creation of the centralised state. Multi-national states also arise when the ruling classes of an emergent nation, with centralised state power in their hands, subjugate other peoples, which as a rule are at a lower level of economic development. Thus many one-nation bourgeois states in the 19th century, in the period when they divided the world between them, turned into colonial empires with a great diversity of nationalities among their populations. In all cases, however, nations are formed on the basis of capitalist production relations.

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Vol. 6, p. 489.

There can be no nation without a common economic life. But this feature produces a nation only in combination with other features that arise in the earlier, pre-capitalist period but develop on the basis of close economic ties. Besides the community of economic life the basic features of a nation include a common language, common territory and certain peculiarities of the people's social psychology, as expressed in specific features of culture. However, the fact that a people may have certain minor psychological and cultural features in common does not do away with the fundamental psychological difference between the members of opposing classes within that nation.

Thus *a nation is a stable community of people bound together by a common language, common territory, community of economic life and certain peculiarities of social psychology, as expressed in the specific features of the culture of the given people, which distinguish its culture from that of other peoples.*

The formation of nations and national movements helped to abolish feudalism and establish capitalism. But in the course of time even the national framework proves too narrow for capitalist society as it develops. Capitalism creates a national and also a world market, which not only consolidates the nation as an economic community but also establishes economic ties between all nations, ultimately turning capitalism into a world economic system.

This leads to profound contradictions, to the emergence of *two tendencies in the development of nations under capitalism*. The first tendency is that of the formation of nations, the rise of national life and national movements, the struggle against feudal separateness and pre-capitalist forms of oppression; the second tendency intensifies economic intercourse between nations and breaks down national barriers by means of "international" capital. "Both tendencies," wrote Lenin, "are a universal law of capitalism. The former predominates in the beginning of its development, the latter characterises a mature capitalism that is moving towards its transformation into socialist society."[1]

The contradiction between these tendencies assumes antagonistic forms. The bourgeoisie of the developed countries seizes foreign territories, enslaves other peoples and pursues a colonial, expansionist policy. Conversely, the peoples enslaved by imperialism rise against it and fight for their liberation.

Under socialism the *development and drawing closer* of nations occur on the basis of the supremacy of social property, of common social and political relations, and the common ideology of socialist

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Critical Remarks on the National Question*, Vol. 20, p. 27.

internationalism and patriotism. The nationalities and nations that are formed on the basis of socialism, like the "old" nations that are transformed on this basis, acquire new features expressing the nature of the new social relations. The nations of socialist society have the same basic attributes as those of bourgeois society: common territory, economic life, language, etc. But the content of these attributes changes fundamentally inasmuch as these nations are based on the socialist mode of production and share essentially common interests and psychological features. Under socialism nations are not split into opposing classes, as under capitalism. The national community therefore coincides with the social community, with the unity of the working people based on social property and joint activity.

Thus we have three types of human community, which historically supersede one another in the progressive development of human society: the clan or tribal community, the nationality and the nation. Their supplanting of one another shows that the development of social production and the social progress that it brings demand wider ethnic communities with greater stability and stronger external ties.

The types of historical community correspond only basically, however, to certain social-economic formations. Situations seldom occur in history when these types of community appear in their "pure" form. Owing to the unevenness of economic development one can find on our planet all types of economic relationship and correspondingly all historical forms of community, from the primitive communal to the socialist, from the tribal community to that of the developed nation. Genetically the tribe precedes the nationality, and the nationality precedes the nation, but in actual history on a world scale, and very often within the framework of one people they are to be found side by side and interacting. For this reason the tribes and nationalities that have survived to this day in many parts of Africa, Asia and other continents differ considerably from what they were even in the recent past, inasmuch as they have, in some way or another, been included in the system of new economic relations. We must bear in mind that colonialism played a decisive role in holding back economic and cultural development of the peoples of many countries, and particularly in delaying the process of their emergence as nations.

3. National Relations Under Capitalism

The formation of nations gave rise to the *nationalities question*, whose development under capitalism may be considered in three stages.

The first stage is the epoch of the establishment of capitalism and the decline of feudalism, the epoch of the transformation of nationalities into nations, when this process was as a rule led by the bourgeoisie (approximately 17th and 18th centuries). In this period mankind (in Europe) experienced the first round of national-liberation wars and revolutions.

The second stage is the period of the spread of capitalism and the growth of "free" capitalism into imperialism (turn of this century), when the developed capitalist countries divided the world and evolved the colonial system of oppression. This was an epoch of powerful national-liberation movements, when peoples that had not yet consolidated into nations rose to fight for their liberation against colonial oppression, against imperialism.

Today we are in the third stage. The present epoch, if considered from the standpoint of the nationalities question, is the epoch of the collapse of the colonial system of imperialism, the epoch of nationhood for the peoples who have liberated or are liberating themselves in the course of anti-imperialist struggle. This process is made easier by the existence of the world socialist system and has already embraced a larger part of mankind. The urge for nationhood coincides with the great social transformations that lead from capitalism to socialism.

Objectively, in their character and role the national movements of emergent capitalism were anti-feudal. They formed one of the conditions for the assertion of capitalism in the struggle of the bourgeoisie and the mass of the people against the feudal order. In the age of imperialism the bourgeoisie of the dominant nation oppresses the peoples of the colonies and dependent countries, and the latter rise to fight for their independence against colonial oppression. The nationalities question here expresses the conflict between the revolutionary, liberating, profoundly democratic movement of the working class, the peasantry and part of the national bourgeoisie and other progressive forces, on the one hand, and the imperialist bourgeoisie, on the other.

Every class taking part in the national movement approaches this problem from its own standpoint. For instance, the national bourgeoisie seeks to replace the colonial system with its own system of domination. This explains its inconsistency, its vacillation, and its occasional conciliation of the imperialist bourgeoisie. The interests of the working class demand the complete abolition of all forms of oppression (including national oppression); hence its consistency and determination in the anti-imperialist struggle.

Under capitalism all social movements directly or indirectly acquire a *political* character and become socio-political movements

and trends. Political activity itself, however, inevitably develops in national forms. This can be seen not only in the case of the bourgeoisie fighting for political supremacy under the banner of nationalism, but also in the case of the working class. This class becomes a political force when its movement assumes a *nation-wide* scale, or, as Marx and Engels put it, when "numerous local struggles" merge "into one national struggle between classes. But every class struggle is a political struggle".[1] The working class fights mainly against its own bourgeoisie and this fight acquires the forms conditioned by the historical stage of development of the given nation.

The nationalities question is a political one also because in a situation in which relations are regulated by state and law it is bound to involve both the country's constitution and state organisation, the policy conducted by the ruling classes. To this should be added the fact that interstate relations, which inevitably have a political character, usually assume the character of national relations.

National relations under capitalism play a tremendous part also in the sphere of the spiritual life of nations. All kinds of spiritual activity, particularly in the sphere of art, assume a national form. Ideological life itself develops, if regarded from the national standpoint, on the basis of the struggle of the two trends "...that correspond to the two great class camps throughout the capitalist world and express the *two* policies (nay, the two world outlooks) in the national question".[2] These two trends are *bourgeois nationalism* and *proletarian internationalism*.

The *nationalist* does not simply proceed from the existence of a certain community of national interests and fight for their realisation. In contrast to the internationalist he exaggerates the significance of these interests. Moreover, he regards all other social interests from this standpoint, either ignoring them or subordinating them to the national interest. Within the country this finds expression mainly in denial of the opposition of classes and class interests, in denial of the class struggle as the driving force of development. In relation to other peoples (including those within the framework of the given state, if it is multi-national) nationalism takes the form of adulation of everything that is "ours", of the national, regardless of its socio-political content, including adulation of obsolete conservative social and political institutions, customs, and traditions. It is also expressed in neglect of, or contempt for, the peculiar features and interests of other nations and nationalities, and in the overt or covert assumption of the inferiority of other

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Vol. 6, p. 493.
[2] V. I. Lenin, *Critical Remarks on the National Question*, Vol. 20, p. 26.

peoples and the exceptional superiority of "our" people.

Nationalism also opposes the establishment of broad ties with other peoples; it recognises such ties only with peoples that are ethnically close to one's own nation, and is hostile to the historically progressive process of the convergence of nations and the merging of some of them with others, even if this process occurs in a "natural" way, in the course of the country's development and not as a result of violent measures or forced assimilation.

In its extreme form nationalism becomes *chauvinism*. Here a contempt for the peculiarities and interests of other peoples grows into dislike and even zoological hatred, which can reach the point of a desire not only to enslave and exploit them but to destroy them altogether. Chauvinism very often assumes such extreme, man-hating forms when nationalism is combined with *racialism*. Racialism became particularly widespread in the age of imperialism, when the bourgeoisie of the developed capitalist countries, which were mainly populated with people of the white race, subjugated numerous "coloured" peoples and in some cases conducted a policy of physical extermination.

Nationalism is closely bound up with *cosmopolitanism*. Outwardly they stand in opposition to each other. Nationalism exaggerates national peculiarities while cosmopolitanism denies their significance. Nationalism and cosmopolitanism are, as it were, the ideological expression of the two basic tendencies in the nationalities question under capitalism. Cosmopolitanism expresses the tendency towards internationalisation of economic relations between countries, towards internationalisation of capital. But by isolating this tendency and opposing it to the second tendency, the tendency towards national unity, cosmopolitanism justifies the economic (and subsequently political) enslavement of other peoples and is the ideological weapon of the expansionist policies of the major capitalist countries towards world domination. Cosmopolitanism serves the imperialist chauvinist aims of the great power which under the flag of abandoning national differences imposes on other countries its domination, its language, its way of life, etc. Cosmopolitanism is the reverse side of nationalism.

Bourgeois nationalism is opposed by *proletarian, socialist internationalism*, which reflects the position of the proletariat in society, its fundamental interests, the nature and character of its liberation struggle. It expresses the essence of the policy, the world outlook and ideology of the working class in the nationalities question. Any departure, even the smallest, from internationalism towards nationalism implies a shift from proletarian class positions to bourgeois positions and harms the struggle of the working class and all work-

ing people, the cause of communism. This is why the revolutionary theory of the working class—Marxism-Leninism—is profoundly internationalist and implacably opposed to all manifestations of nationalism, no matter what form they assume.

In contrast to the nationalist and cosmopolitan the internationalist is a patriot. *Internationalism and patriotism* are as *inseparable* as the nationalism and cosmopolitanism which oppose it. The working class expresses the true interests of the people of its country, their desire for progress and prosperity. It is deeply concerned about what happens to its people, and fights for their better future. No class or party is better equipped than the working class and its party to represent and defend the real interests of its nation, to lead the general national movement for social progress, for socialism.

The working class cannot stand aside from the national movements of the age. As an active revolutionary force, it must reveal the socio-political content of each movement, its objective role in the life of society, define its own attitude to this movement and, depending on the prevailing conditions, either lead it or, conversely, actively oppose the bourgeois-nationalist trends and groups which play a reactionary role and divert the masses from the struggle against imperialism (for example, contemporary Zionism).

Bourgeois ideologists usually do all they can to obscure the class approach to this question. The great majority of them reject such attributes of nation as stability of economic ties, common language, etc. They see the origin and cause of the rise of nations in a "national idea", in a "sense of national identity", in certain features of social psychology. For this reason they often fail to distinguish between the terms "national" and "nationalistic".

Maintaining that nations stand above classes, bourgeois ideologists ignore the difference between progressive national movements and reactionary movements (such as fascism). They try to boost nationalism and chauvinism in order to divide the peoples fighting against imperialism and drive a wedge between the socialist countries. In this they are well served by the right and "left" revisionists, who bank on separating the socialist countries from one another and thus on weakening the world socialist system, on splitting the world communist movement. The revisionists throw out the fundamental principle of socialist internationalism—the class approach to the problem of nationalities—and place the interests of certain countries in opposition to the general cause of socialism.

Marxist-Leninist theory provides a correct and fully consistent solution to the question of nationalities. One of the most important conditions on which the solution of this problem rests is its subordination to the tasks of the struggle and the interests of the working

class and all working people. The abolition of classes and the causes that give rise to class distinctions is the main condition for the gradual disappearance of national differences in the future, when communism is completely victorious.

4. Communism and the Future of Nations

The abolition of exploitation and fraternal cooperation between the peoples allow every nation to make use of its own specific abilities for the rapid development of culture. This means that socialism does not kill distinctions between nations but encourages a national renaissance. The nationalities and tribes doomed by capitalism to extinction and forcible extermination are restored to new life and together with other nations develop their economy and culture, improve their native tongues and give them a written form. Some of them adapt themselves to the life and culture of the bigger nations and gradually merge with them into a single nationality or nation, but the majority consolidate into independent nationalities and nations on the basis of the new socialist relations.

Under socialism the tendency towards internationalisation of the economic, social and intellectual life of society comes into its own. Socialism brings the peoples together, gives them more and more common features and evokes a need for a new form of communication that is wider than the national form. Thus in the process of building socialism in the USSR a historically new social and international community has been formed—Soviet people.

This second tendency towards drawing peoples closer together does not clash but combines with the first, which is expressed in the flowering of nations. Socialism provides a basis for the fusion of the specific interests of separate nations with the interests of the whole multi-national population, for the unity of the national and international.

The operation of this law of development of a nation under socialism shows itself not only in the framework of the USSR and other multi-national states but also in the whole world system of socialism. Here the relations between nations constitute not an internal state problem but an inter-state problem.

Every socialist country contributes to the consolidation of the socialist community, above all by its successes in economic and cultural construction. But this is only one side of the matter and expresses only one tendency in the nationalities question. The other side lies in strengthening and further improving the economic, political and cultural cooperation with other socialist countries (econom-

ic integration, coordination of national economic plans, the social division of labour within the framework of the world socialist system, specialisation and cooperation, exchange of scientific information and technological know-how, trade, cultural relations, cooperation in matters concerning the defence of the socialist countries and safeguarding peace, in assisting the developing countries and so on).

In contrast to capitalism, which sets one nation against another and encourages powerful imperialist countries to use even the historically necessary coming together of nations for the purpose of enslaving small and weak peoples, socialism does everything to achieve a harmonious combination of the two tendencies in the nationalities question. But it offers only the possibility of such a solution, a possibility that has to be turned into reality. The Soviet Union has accumulated tremendous experience in dealing with the nationalities question from the standpoint of internationalism. It has achieved not only political and legal equality for its nations, but also actual equality in the things that really matter. But even here not all manifestations of nationalism have yet been eliminated.

All the more understandable, then, are the difficulties involved in uniting peoples of socialist countries with radically different historical backgrounds, peoples that represent independent state formations and are at different stages of economic and cultural development.

In pursuing its policy of weakening the forces of socialism the imperialist bourgeoisie relies on manifestations of nationalism and any kind of difficulty that may occur in the process of rapprochement of the socialist states. This is why it is so important today to adopt a principled internationalist policy on the nationalities question, a policy based on the scientific management of society, and consistent opposition to all varieties of nationalism.

The victory of communism on a world scale will provide the necessary material and intellectual preconditions for the merging of nations. A communist economy developing according to a single plan and securing a degree of economic integration never known before will gradually be formed throughout the world. There will emerge a common moral code which will fully absorb all that is best in the character of each nation. There will be a common language, a common means of communication for all people. Mankind will become one united, fraternal community completely free of antagonisms.

Chapter XIV

THE POLITICAL ORGANISATION OF SOCIETY

The appearance of classes and the exacerbation of class antagonisms complicate the structure of social life. New forms of social relations, political and legal, arise. The sphere of political life comprises a number of organisations and social institutions that were unknown to pre-class society. Most important of them is the *state*, which is the organisation of the political power of the ruling class. In class society *political Parties* and various *public organisations* arise that are designed to win or maintain power, to fight for the interests of this or that class. All these organisations and social institutions, taken together, form the *political organisation of society*. The political organisation of any class society may thus be defined as *a system of institutions and organisations regulating the political relations between classes, nations and states*. The sphere of the political life of society embraces political institutions and relations, political consciousness and activities.

1. Transition from the Non-Political (Communal) Organisation of Society to Its Political Organisation

In primitive tribal society social relations were regulated by the force of habit, custom and tradition embodying centuries of life and work in common. The main force in social life was the people.

The appearance of more developed forms of social division of labour and of private ownership of the means of production rendered the tribal organs of administration unfit for the new conditions. As Engels observes, the tribal system "was burst asunder by the division of labour and by its result, the division of society into classes. Its place was taken by the *state*".[1]

Whereas the tribal organs of power rested on social ownership and the community of interests of the primary human groups, the clans and tribes, the state was to serve the needs that had arisen out of the relationships of private property. Inasmuch as private proper-

[1] F. Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, in: K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 326.

ty had become increasingly concentrated in the hands of a small group of people who used it for bending the poor and needy to their will, the state represented and defended the interests of the exploiters against the oppressed and exploited masses. Its appearance was a result and objective indication of the irreconcilable nature of class contradictions. When these contradictions become irreconcilable there has to be a special organisation of power which is no longer identified with the people itself and whose function is to hold down the oppressed classes. In place of the instrument of society that the organs of tribal administration were, the state emerges as a force that seems to "stand above society" and increasingly "alienates itself from society".

The state is characterised by three basic features or attributes.

First, it is a *public power* in contrast to the direct organisation of the armed people which existed in tribal society. The characteristic feature of the state, as Lenin explained, is not its power of coercion in general, which is to be found in some form or other in any society, but above all its public power, that is, a power that does not coincide with the mass of the population and is exercised by a special category of people. A permanent civil service, special contingents of armed men (army, police, secret police), punitive and intelligence organs of the state and their corresponding "material" attributes—prisons, concentration camps and the like—are the essential components and instruments of the public power.

Second, the state organisation of society presupposes the levying of *taxes* that are needed for the upkeep of the apparatus of power. As internal and external contradictions become more intense and the state apparatus grows, its maintenance swallows up more and more of the resources of society.

Third, the subjects of the state are divided not according to blood relationship but on the basis of *territory*. The territorial division of the population promotes the development of economic ties and the creation of political conditions for their regulation. The state protects the interests of the ruling class primarily within the boundaries of the given territory, keeping the oppressed classes there in subjection. This is its main task inside the country. But it also protects the interests of the ruling class beyond its borders, guarding certain territories, their wealth and population from the incursions of other exploiting states or attempting to extend these territories at the expense of neighbours or countries further afield that have not sufficient strength to resist. This is the external function of the state, which is subordinate to the main, internal function and continues it.

The state is thus a *political superstructure on an economic basis.*

It is the organisation of the power of the economically dominant class, which, thanks to the state, acquires political supremacy as well. The essence of the state is thus determined by the relationship of the ruling class to other classes. *The state is the organisation of the ruling class for the protection of its fundamental interests* and, above all, the form of property which this class represents. The basic function of the state in exploiting society is to hold down the oppressed classes, for which purpose it relies on force, on the organs of coercion.

The internal activity of the state is not limited to this main function, however. As an organisation of the ruling class it also seeks to regulate the relations between the members of that class, in order to promote its unity in the struggle with the opposing classes. In some cases the state also regulates interrelations between the exploiting classes inasmuch as it defends their common interests (thus the feudal state, especially in the age of absolutism, while expressing the interests of the serf-owning feudal landlords, also gave some protection to the interests of the merchants, and the emergent bourgeoisie). The state also has means (mainly legal) of regulating the whole system of social relations—ethnic (if the state is multi-national), family, and so on, thus promoting the consolidation of a certain socio-economic order. Finally, the state deals with a number of economic and cultural problems.

Bourgeois ideologists cite the diversity of state activities as an argument for denying its class essence. They regard the origin of the state as mainly due to spiritual factors—mutual consent, the growing spiritual maturity of people who have "become aware" that social life cannot be organised without the state, and also certain features of human nature, the needs of social psychology, morality, and so on. This approach implies that politics and the state, having once arisen, must exist forever.

Marxism-Leninism, on the contrary, argues the historical character of the state, which is connected with the class essence of state power.

The functions of the state, though diverse, are all subordinated to its main function, which expresses its class essence. No matter how we approach the state in class-divided society, it turns out to be an organisation of the ruling class defending the interests of that class. This, of course, refers also to the economic function of the exploiting state. Thus, in building canals, roads and irrigation works the state is mainly concerned with the development of production and exchange in the interests of increased profits for the exploiters.

In contemporary bourgeois society the state, by using funds obtained from the population through taxation for subsidising the mo-

nopolies and placing orders with them, by paying for research and development, enables the bourgeoisie to exploit the working people not only directly at their own enterprises but also indirectly, throughout the system of social production. By the same token, expenditure on public education, which is met out of the taxes paid by the working people, is mainly designed to prepare a sufficiently skilled labour force for the employers.

The state protects the property of the ruling class and its privileges through the *law.*

In primitive communal society human relations were regulated by custom, tradition and morality (generally accepted norms of behaviour any violation of which evoked social condemnation). The appearance of private property and the division of society into classes complicated social life and created a demand for standards that could be imposed on the oppressed.

Law is the sum total of the standards of behaviour laid down in legal acts sanctioned by the state.

Law is the will of the ruling class, say Marx and Engels, embodied in legal acts. Therefore, like the state, law has a class character and in class-divided society is an instrument in the hands of the ruling class for holding down the working people.

Law legitimises also the standards that regulate relations between property-owners themselves and provides the judicial sanction necessary for the "normal" functioning of economic relations. Every property-owner in dealing with other property-owners wants to safeguard his own interests, whether in the field of commerce, finance or anything else. The transfer of his property to his heir or another person also demands judicial regulation.

All these factors gave rise to the need to strengthen and supplement the objective relations of property that form part of the economic structure of society with legal acts. Law formulates the economic relations and the social relations depending on them, that is, the relations between classes and social groups (for example, no rights for some and privileges for others, formal equality before the law), the family and the relationships between its members, the position of ethnic minorities, and so on. It also defines the legal status of all social institutions and organisations, religious communities, and legally specifies the position, rights and duties of individual citizens. Law embraces in some degree all aspects of the life of society, all forms of people's activities, and all forms of social relations.

Just as the state cannot manage without law, so the law cannot function without the state, which safeguards the legal norms. Law originated together with the state and together with it will wither away when the causes that engendered it have disappeared. For this

reason Marx and Engels always regarded the state and legal superstructure on the economic basis as a single institution.

With the formation of the state and the appearance of law there came into being new, hitherto unknown forms of relations between people—*political* and *legal* relations. Political relations are, at bottom, relations between classes. But not all relations between classes may be regarded as political. When the workers sell their labour-power to the capitalist or even when they fight for increased wages, these relations and this struggle are economic and social, but not by any means political. But if the workers at even one factory present demands to the whole class of capitalists or to the bourgeois state, this is conscious political struggle, political relations.

Political relations between classes express in a concentrated form their fundamental economic interests. These relations, like all superstructural relations, take shape through the medium of people's consciousness. They are built up in accordance with political ideals and goals, with the ideas and views of political parties and politicians. The policy of a class is the more or less conscious (at least for its vanguard) line of conduct of this class in relation to other classes, social groups and the state.

This line of conduct is pursued in the economic, social and cultural spheres, although in themselves these spheres may lie beyond the bounds of politics. Thus we can speak of the economic (trade or financial) policy of the bourgeoisie, which it pursues mainly through the medium of the state, of the policy of the bourgeoisie in the sphere of national relations, the sphere of public education, and so on.

The whole system of political relations expresses the economic relations of class society and is the only form in which these relations can function. It is because the economy cannot function and develop outside this form that at a certain stage it gives rise to politics. "On the whole, the economic movement gets its way," wrote Engels, "but it has also to suffer reactions from the political movement which it itself established and endowed with relative independence...."[1]

We must also note the undeniable increase of the role of politics, and particularly political organisation, in the life of society and its economic development today. There are many reasons for this: the development of social production and increasing scale of direction of the economy and society; the accompanying increase in the number of conscious elements in social life, despite the spontaneous

[1] F. Engels to C. Schmidt in Berlin. London, October 27, 1890, in: K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 491.

character of the development of the economy of class-divided soviety as a whole; the growth of the proportion and significance of political forms of struggle, particularly under capitalism; and the enhanced economic role of the state in the life of society.

2. Development of Political Organisation and Its Role in Social Life

In the course of history private property has changed its types and forms, and the types of class structure and modes of exploitation have changed with it, bringing in their train different political relations, beliefs and institutions, in short, a completely different political organisation of society.

In slave-owning society the rightless position of the slaves, the division of the free members of society into castes and exclusive groups, some of which enjoyed a privileged position, were established in law and legal relationships. The state was, in essence, the dictatorship of the slave-owners: it guarded their property and privileges, and kept the slaves and other opposing sections of the population in subjection. In addition, the state and the army held in obedience the population of subjugated territories.

There were various forms of administration in slave society: oriental despotisms (China, India, the Near East), empires (of Alexander the Great, Roman), and republics (Athens, Rome in the early period). As Lenin wrote: "At that time there was already a difference between monarchy and republic, between aristocracy and democracy. A monarchy is the power of a single person, a republic is the absence of any non-elected authority; an aristocracy is the power of a relatively small minority, a democracy is the power of the people.... All these differences arose in the epoch of slavery. Despite these differences, the state of the slave-owning epoch was a slave-owning state, irrespective of whether it was a monarchy or a republic, aristocratic or democratic."[1]

Other political organisations had scarcely evolved, although there did exist certain political groupings and associations of slave-owners (e.g., the party struggles in Greece and Rome), and secret organisations and leagues were not uncommon among the slaves. In the political life of nearly all slave-owning countries religious organisations played a prominent part.

The feudal mode of production brought into being a new type of political organisation of society, and new legal and political rela-

[1] V. I. Lenin, *The State*, Vol. 29, p. 479.

tions. Here, too, economic compulsion was supplemented with other forms, although the exploiter did not have the legal right of life and death over the exploited. Feudal law granted privileges to some estates and deprived others of almost all rights.

The state apparatus in feudal society showed considerable growth in comparison with that of slave-owning society. The officials, the judiciary, the standing army and officer corps became so numerous that they accounted for a considerable or even the greater part of the ruling class.

A characteristic feature of the feudal state was the hierarchical system and vassal relationships. For a long time, while its various provinces were economically isolated, the feudal state remained politically diffuse. Dukes, princes and barons were essentially independent rulers with their own armies, sometimes even their own coinage, etc. But with the growth of the bourgeoisie and the development of market relations the central power began to combat this feudal isolation with the help of the expanding towns, and it was then that the transition to absolute monarchy began. Republican forms of government were far less frequent in the epoch of feudalism and were to be found mainly in the medieval cities.

The distinctive feature of feudal society is the tremendous role played by the church in the system of state power; it was a political as well as an ideological force. Catholicism in Europe, for example, was a mighty centralised force with its own military formations (orders); the feudal lords had to share their power with the church and were quite often subordinate to the clergy.

Besides the state, legal institutions and the church the political organisation of feudal society comprised various hierarchical organisations and associations. Political organisations and parties in the modern sense were non-existent. The organisations created by the oppressed masses, when taking part in peasant wars and city uprisings to defend their freedoms from the encroachments of the feudal lords, were often religious in form.

The political organisation of class-divided society achieves its peak development under capitalism. The legal and political relations of capitalist society reflect the peculiarities of its production relations. In contrast to the hierarchical inequality of the feudal estates, formal equality before the law is a characteristic feature of the legal standards of bourgeois society. The law ceases to be localised and is enforced throughout the country. The complexity and diversity of the economic and other social relations is paralleled by the complexity and diversity of legal standards, which regulate not only the relations between classes but also all forms of economic relations in production and distribution of products, particularly commodity-

money and financial relations, the status of social organisations, political parties and the press; the norms of the civil and criminal law, the personal rights of citizens, and so on, are worked out in great detail. Despite all this, however, just as in previous epochs the law mainly expresses the interests and will of the ruling class—the bourgeoisie—and protects bourgeois property.

The process of the centralisation of state power that began under feudalism is completed under capitalism; national, and in some cases, multi-national centralised states arise. The feudal monarchy yields place to the republic or limited monarchy (with a bourgeois parliament and government accountable to it). The legislative, executive and judicial powers are separated. Instead of a mercenary army there is usually conscription. The main organs of state power—the civil service, army, police, intelligence and prisons—become larger and more sophisticated.

Political relations, political forms and methods of struggle acquire added weight and importance as the class struggle gains wider scope and becomes more open. The political parties, along with the state, occupy an extremely important place in the system of political organisation. The press, radio and television become instruments of tremendous power in the political struggle.

The abolition of medieval relations, of serfdom and the privileges of the feudal estates, was a tremendous step forward in human progress. It was an important gain for the working class and all working people, who for the first time acquired the right to have their own political parties, organisations and press organs. But despite this advance from the system of the feudal monarchy, bourgeois democracy remains restricted and formal. This is not merely because capitalism cannot fully realise a single democratic demand. The universal franchise, for instance, is never in any capitalist country truly universal. The system of qualifications (property, residential, educational, etc.) deprives considerable sections of the working people of their electoral rights. In the overwhelming majority of even the most advanced bourgeois countries women do not have equal rights with men. Nowhere has the bourgeoisie and bourgeois democracy ever completely eliminated national oppression. But the main point is that bourgeois democracy does not abolish human exploitation. It is this that deprives it of its democratic character and true humanity. What is more, bourgeois democracy is the political form that provides the bourgeoisie with the best opportunity of exercising its economic advantages at the expense of the working people.

Open forms of coercion are used even in the most democratic bourgeois republic. One has only to recall the anti-labour legisla-

tion, the persecution of the communist parties and the rigging of trials against them. To this must be added the existence of reactionary terrorist organisations and groups, inspired and financed by the monopolies, their beating up or murder of progressives and similar acts of violence. This swing towards reaction is particularly evident in the epoch of imperialism; it culminates in *fascism,* which is an openly terroristic form of dictatorship of the imperialist bourgeoisie.

All these facts expose the bourgeois ideologists' assertion that with the emergence of a democratic republic the state loses its class character and becomes representative of the whole of society. This is also the position of the right-wing socialists, the reformists.

In reality, however, the democratic system of elections does not in itself change the class essence of the bourgeois state or make it an instrument of majority rule. If the means of production are owned by capitalists, if the capitalists still retain their economic and politi cal power, any laws, even those passed under pressure from the working people, can be turned against them. No matter what these laws are, the ruling minority ensures the protection of its interests through the machinery of the executive power, which is virtually independent of the parliament elected by popular vote. The executive apparatus consists of officials who are not accountable to the electorate, and who form a privileged caste associated with the bourgeoisie in every respect. It is the apparatus of officials and the military that runs the affairs of state.

The transition to imperialism has enhanced the economic role of the state. The accumulation of state property, militarisation, allocation of increasing tax revenues for economic development, state subsidies for research and development—all this has enlarged the bourgeois state's role in production programming, price policy and direct involvement in social relations.

The intensification of state-monopoly capitalism is regarded by many bourgeois ideologists as a "revolution" in the functions of the state. But the alleged increase of the organising role of the state, as an "economic leader and public servant", in reality signifies only the strengthening of the capitalist monopolies, which subordinate the state machine and use it for their own enrichment. In doing so they apply not only indirect methods (bribery of officials, deputies, ministers, etc.), but also take direct action. The major capitalists, the directors of banks and presidents of corporations assume ministerial and other important posts and see to it that the policy pursued is in favour of the monopolies. At for the state economy, it develops according to the laws of capitalist production and is regulated not so much by the executive organs of the state (let alone parliament) as by the influential monopoly groups. So bourgeois

ideologists and right-wing socialists are wrong in asserting that the bourgeois state is becoming a "welfare society", the organiser of economic and social life in the interests of all members of society.

The Marxist view of the state is distorted not only by the reformists (right-wing socialists), but also by the anarchists (anarcho-syndicalists). The anarchists of today do not usually deny the significance of the political struggle. But they still ignore the leading role of the working class and the painstaking work that has to be done to rally the masses. Instead they constantly urge rebellion, remain hostile to any state, including the socialist (which they consider an evil, inevitably a vehicle of bureaucracy, etc.), and completely deny the significance of centralism, to which they counterpose autonomism. Anarchism is seldom seen nowadays in its "pure" form. It leaves an imprint on the actions and tactics of various trade-union organisations and political parties, and on the student movement. Ideas derived from anarchism are often advanced by bourgeois or petty-bourgeois "critics" of capitalism (Herbert Marcuse, the Trotskyites).

In the communist movement the influence of both these trends, which are hostile to Marxism-Leninism, is reflected in the form of revisionism from the right and from the "left". The right-wing revisionists, like the reformists, try to tone down present-day class conflicts, to dilute the class content of democracy and quietly assume a position of "pure" democracy that is allegedly beyond classes. When confronted by socialist construction, the revisionists belittle the role of the communist party, the role of the socialist state in economic life, and the role of politics in general. In this respect they fall in line with the anarcho-syndicalists.

"Left" revisionism, "leftist" adventurism flying the flag of radicalism and "superrevolutionism", denies the significance of objective conditions in evolving revolutionary tactics, denies the importance of organisational and educational work among the masses, and recognises only military guerilla methods of struggle against the bourgeoisie. It also rules out the possibility of agreement and compromise, the use by the working class of the bourgeois state, parliament, and other institutions at a certain stage of its struggle: on this point "left" revisionists are in agreement with the anarchists. At the same time, while the anarchists deny the role of the socialist state, the advocates of "left" revisionism absolutise its role, which they reduce mainly to coercion. For the method of persuasion and education, which is the essence of the leadership of the working class and its party, they substitute command, high-handedness and compulsion. They pay lip service to the dictatorship of the proletariat, but in practice deny its essence. They are further characterised by a

belief in the omnipotence of political means and methods, which are allegedly capable of bringing about a transformation of the economy regardless of the operation of economic laws. This adventurist policy, as experience has shown, sooner or later leads inevitably to disaster.

3. Political Organisation of Socialist Society

The winning of power by the working class creates the new type of political organisation of society essential for building socialism and communism.

The basis of this political organisation is the *state of the dictatorship of the proletariat.* This is essential to the working class for suppressing the resistance of the defeated exploiting classes. But the main element in the political power of the working class is not coercion. The working class leads and rallies all the working people, and draws them into socialist construction.

Thus *the socialist state is, above all, an instrument for uniting the masses and educating them in the spirit of communism, an instrument for building the new society.* This state is dictatorial in a new way, because it is directed against the bourgeoisie, and democratic in a new way, because it secures democracy for the working people. Here we have the class essence of the socialist state, as opposed to the bourgeois state, which is the instrument of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

The political forms of the socialist state may be of various kinds (the Soviet form, the forms that have become established in the socialist countries of Eastern Europe, Asia and in Cuba; other forms of socialist state are also possible, including the parliamentary republic). But the essence of all these forms is one and the same: the rule of the working class, its leadership of society, of the state.

The functions of the working-class state are also fundamentally different from those of the pre-revolutionary state. From being an instrument for holding down the working people it becomes an instrument of the power of the working people themselves, led by the working class. This means that it retains its suppressive function, while giving it a fundamentally different content. The socialist state suppresses the exploiters insofar as they continue to exist or until their resistance is broken. The forms and means of suppression depend on the degree and character of this resistance. The economic and cultural activities that constitute important aspects of the activity of the exploiting state but do not count among its basic functions now acquire increasing significance and become the *main*

internal functions of the socialist state. A fundamental change takes place in the content and social essence of the external functions. The working-class state has no aggressive aspirations, no desire to seize territories or subjugate other peoples. Its external functions are to defend the socialist country and strengthen the international solidarity of the working people, to support the just struggle of the oppressed peoples or peoples subjected to imperialist aggression, and to normalise economic and cultural links with all countries of the world, to establish peaceful coexistence between countries with different social systems and work consistently for détente in international relations.

Abolition of the old apparatus of power, its complete renewal is a general law of the socialist revolution. This is one of the things that distinguishes the socialist revolution from the bourgeois revolution. Instead of destroying the old apparatus of executive power, the bourgeois revolution preserved and perfected it. The proletarian revolution, on the other hand, destroys the state machinery designed to oppress the people (police, secret police, the old army, officialdom, etc.). The scrapping of this apparatus and its replacement by a new one may be effected in various ways, depending on the specific conditions—at once, as was the case in Soviet Russia, or gradually. The scrapping of the old state machine does not rule out the possibility of using certain of its elements in building the new state, particularly the elements connected with the control of economic and management functions (banks, post-office, and so on).

In the conditions of working-class rule the state ceases to be a bureaucratic institution standing in opposition to the people. The hang-overs of bureaucracy that survive in certain departments of the state apparatus during the transitional period and even later, under socialism, are alien to the nature of the socialist state and are successfully overcome as socialism becomes more firmly established, as the culture and communist consciousness of the population grows and socialist democracy and administration get into their stride.

The new type of state brings into being a *new type of law.* Socialist law serves the interests of the working people and legalises new social relations; it safeguards social property and defines the legal position of the state organs and mass organisations, the rights and duties of individual citizens, etc. The socialist state functions on the basis of legal standards, and these play an active role in the life of society because they are safeguarded by the state. Taken together, they form the constitutional and legal superstructure of socialist society.

Tremendous changes take place in all departments of the politi-

cal organisation of society under socialism. The mass organisations of the working people that sprang up in the days of capitalism to fight the exploiters become part of the system of the new political organisation and draw the masses into the management of society and the state. Some of them may become the foundation and political form of state power (Soviets). Others undertake individual state functions (for example, the trade unions protect labour at enterprises). But as a whole the working people's mass organisations are not direct organs of state power, although they cooperate closely with them in protecting the working people's interests and in organising socialist and communist construction. The Communist Party becomes the ruling party, the directing and leading force of the socialist state and the entire political organisation of socialist society.

The forms of political organisation of socialist society are as diverse as the forms of the socialist state. The countries of socialism differ from one another in certain features of their political structure, the scale of rights granted to various organisations, the methods of work derived from the historical background of these countries and from the tasks of socialist construction, the absence or existence of several political parties, and so on. But their socialist character, the leading role of the Communist Party, which guides the activities of the state and all mass organisations, the fundamental principles of organising the masses and building up public and state bodies, steady adherence to the principles of Marxism-Leninism—these remain the same in all cases.

With the victory of socialism the state ceases to be a means of suppressing the resistance of the exploiters, and becomes the embodiment of popular unity. The state thus grows into a *state of the whole people*. Naturally, the essential nature of the socialist state, born of the proletarian revolution, does not change. It is wrong to oppose the dictatorship of the proletariat to the socialist state of the whole people. The new stage of statehood corresponding to the complete victory of socialism does not alter the leading role of the working class in the life of society.

The victory of the developed socialist society and its gradual advance towards communism entail further democratisation of the whole political system of administration and a steady enhancement of the working people's role in government. This objective process is reflected in the new Constitution of the USSR, which was passed at the extraordinary Seventh Session of the Ninth Supreme Soviet of the USSR in October 1977. In the 40 years since the adoption of the 1936 Constitution, said Leonid Brezhnev in his report at the plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee on May 24, 1977,

profound changes had taken place in the country. A developed, mature socialist society had been built in the Soviet Union. Major, fundamental changes had affected all aspects of social life thanks to the successes in socialist construction under the leadership of the Communist Party. The country's economy had changed beyond recognition. Socialist forms of property now reigned supreme. A united, powerful national economic organism was developing on the basis of a merging of the achievements of the scientific and technological revolution with the advantages of the socialist system. Soviet society was becoming more socially homogeneous. The inviolable alliance of the working class, the collective-farm peasantry and the people's intelligentsia was even stronger. The distinctions between the basic social groups were gradually being erased. All the nations and nationalities of the USSR were coming closer together in the course of their everyday activities. A historically new community—the Soviet people—had taken shape. With the building of mature socialism and the adoption by all sections of the population of the ideological and political positions of the working class, the Soviet state, which had begun as a dictatorship of the proletariat, had grown into a state of the whole people. The Soviet Union's international status and the whole socio-political face of the world had changed considerably. The capitalist encirclement of the USSR was no more. Socialism had become a world system, a powerful socialist community had grown up. The positions of world capitalism had been substantially weakened. Dozens of young states, former colonies, were rising in opposition to imperialism. A real possibility of preventing a new world war had appeared, although success in this sphere would still demand intense and persistent effort.

On the basis of what had been achieved the Soviet people under the leadership of the Communist Party was now tackling the historic tasks of building a communist society.[1]

All these changes were reflected in the new Constitution of the USSR, which "defines the social, economic and political rights and freedoms of citizens and the specific guarantees of these rights more widely, clearly and fully than ever before and anywhere else".[2]

The characteristic feature, the main direction of the new Constitution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is the further expansion and deepening of socialist democracy. The dialectics of

[1] See L. I. Brezhnev, *Our Course: Peace and Socialism*, Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, Moscow, 1978, pp. 63-65.

[2] L. I. Brezhnev, *On the Draft Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Results of the Nationwide Discussion of the Draft*, Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, Moscow, 1977, p. 20.

Soviet state and social development, said Leonid Brezhnev in his report to the extraordinary Seventh Session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, on October 4, 1977, lies in the fact that "...with the development and advancement of the socialist state millions of citizens are increasingly involved in the activities of government and people's control bodies, in the management of production and distribution, in social and cultural policies, and in the administration of justice. In short, along with the development of socialist democracy our statehood is gradually being transformed into communist social self-government. This is, of course, a long process, but it is proceeding steadily."[1]

In the period of developed socialism the state cannot renounce the use of compulsion upon members of society who break its laws and act against the interests of society, of the people. But as socialist society develops and the communist consciousness of its citizens is enhanced, measures of education and persuasion acquire ever greater significance. There are closer ties between the state organs and mass organisations and all working people, and the democratic character of the socialist state is more fully revealed. The policy of the Party and the Soviet state is dictated by the fundamental interests of the working people. This policy is worked out by the representatives of the working people in the elective bodies, with the active participation of the masses in the discussion of major plans and decisions, and in control over their fulfilment.

Thus we see that the political organisation of society under socialism is preserved, acquiring an ever greater role in social life. This by no means contradicts the thesis on the withering away of the state and politics in general under communism. The peculiar feature of the political organisation of socialist society lies in the fact that in its content it is profoundly democratic, and its form and organisational structure secure further development of socialist democracy and conscious discipline of the masses, who gradually grow accustomed to fulfilling their duties voluntarily. This is a most important precondition for the transition to the stateless system. The perfecting of the political organisation of socialist society makes it possible to evolve within the framework of this organisation the mechanism of the future communist self-administration, which will no longer need any political "envelope". This envelope will become obsolete and wither away, but only in the relatively distant future, in conditions of developed communism, and we cannot yet estimate the rate and forms of this process without departing from the standards of strict scientific inquiry.

[1] Ibid., p. 23.

4. The Present Historical Epoch and the Political Organisation of Society

The diversity of political life is not confined to the basic types of political organisation of society considered above. Every type of political organisation has diverse forms conditioned by the specific historical conditions of this or that country, by the balance of its class forces, and the character of the alliances and blocs that are concluded between the ruling classes and political parties taking part in the government coalition.

The present epoch is particularly rich in forms of political organisation. This epoch, the main content of which is the transition, on a world scale, from capitalism and pre-capitalist relations to socialist relations, offers examples of various types of state and gives rise to many states of the transitional type which are bringing the people of various countries to socialist government.

A distinction must be drawn between the imperialist states and the states led by the national bourgeoisie in former colonies, which are compelled in one way or another to fight against neo-colonialism and imperialism and, accordingly, rely on the working masses of their countries to defend their independence and promote economic and social progress. Among these there are also states which cooperate with the imperialist forces and therefore play a completely reactionary role. And there are young democratic states led by the most radical sections of the national bourgeoisie, the democratic intelligentsia and progressive military, who are fighting actively against imperialism and conducting democratic reforms designed to abolish the pre-capitalist forms of oppression and extend the working people's social rights, to accelerate economic and cultural progress. Some of these states have a socialist orientation and try to base their activities on cooperation with the socialist countries.

Democratic states whose activity clears the way for socialism may arise not only in the economically backward countries. Under certain conditions they may be created even in developed capitalist countries on the basis of the victory of a broad democratic bloc, including the Communists, and the formation of a government which, with popular support, could restrict the privileges of the monopolies, extend the social and democratic rights of the working people, curb the activities of the pro-fascist and other extreme reactionary groups, and work for peace and friendship among nations against aggressors and all who seek to unleash war.

But no matter how diverse the types of state and types of political organisation of society may be in countries with different socio-economic relations, there exist in the modern world two opposing

centres of attraction—socialism and capitalism. Their struggle determines the content of our epoch and leaves its mark on the economic, social and political processes in all countries of the world.

Up to this point we have considered the political organisation of society mainly from the standpoint of individual countries. But there are grounds for speaking of a political organisation of society embracing all or many countries of the world.

Capitalism itself, when it became a world system of economy, needed legal standards for regulating economic and other relations on an internationl scale, including the relations between states themselves, and it created international legal and political organisations, etc. Needless to say, states have continued to function in their national, territorially restricted framework but at the same time there have arisen world economic and political associations of capitalists, inter-state blocs and political alliances (NATO, CEATO and others) directed not only against competing groups of bourgeois states but also against the working people of their own countries and against the countries of socialism.

In their turn the revolutionary political and other organisations of the working class do not confine themselves to individual countries, but join their efforts on an international scale to coordinate their actions and the working-class struggle of all countries against their own bourgeoisie and against international capital.

The emergence of the community of socialist countries naturally brings into being a corresponding political organisation. Every state that belongs to the world socialist community is completely independent and sovereign. The relations between them are based on equality, trust, fraternal friendship and proletarian internationalism. The functions of the individual socialist states largely coincide, the differences between them springing mainly from their different levels of economic development and historical and national peculiarities. These differences account for the fact that the socialist countries, besides the common interests that bind them together, have their own specific interests which, if correctly interpreted, do not conflict with their common interests.

The forces of socialism have grown to such an extent politically as well as economically and socially that international legal and political relations can no longer take shape on the basis of the domination of the forces of capitalism. The bourgeois states are compelled to seek certain agreements with the socialist states, and these are set down in international treaties. Such agreements and treaties conform to the interests of the socialist states. Because they are the result of mutual concessions they reflect the current balance of forces. The states belonging to the socialist community seek to

make the general content of these treaties as democratic as possible. Their activities in such international organisations as the United Nations are also directed to this end.

In the sphere of political relations the opposition between class interests is particularly evident and the struggle between them becomes acute. Political organisations and institutions play a tremendous part in this struggle. It is therefore extremely important to take into consideration the role of the political organisation of society not only in individual countries but also in the system of world relations in any given historical epoch.

Chapter XV

SOCIAL REVOLUTION

Social revolutions are vital turning-points in history. They overthrow the obsolete and establish the new social system, thus launching epochs of rapid progress.

Bourgeois philosophy and sociology usually deny the law-governed nature of social revolutions, regarding them as "disruptions" of the historical process and deviations from the "normal" evolution of society. Some bourgeois ideologists declare that modern science has given the ruling class power which renders mass revolutions obsolete. But life refutes such assertions. The victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia and the collapse of the fascist empires in the Second World War were followed by a great wave of socialist and national liberation revolutions. The world revolutionary process today is spreading ever wider. No wonder that in these circumstances many bourgeois politicians and sociologists try to take advantage of the popularity of the idea of revolution among the masses. They declare themselves spokesmen of all kinds of "revolutions"—"managerial revolutions", "income revolutions", etc., which are supposed to have changed the nature of capitalism. The repudiation of revolution is now being replaced by attempts to distort its essence, to deprive it of the thing that really matters—the overthrow of the obsolete social system.

Historical materialism exposes the falsity of such ideas and allows us to arrive at a scientific definition of social revolutions, their role in history and the laws of their rise and development.

1. Social Revolution as the Law of the Replacement of Social-Economic Formations

We have already seen that in the development of society there occur both gradual evolutionary changes and leaps in various fields of social life—science and technology, the means of production and communications, people's outlook and so on. The most significant of these are termed "revolutions". But even significant changes in certain aspects of social life, taken by themselves, do not yet signify social revolution. Social revolution means a fundamental change in

the whole social system.

Qualitative transformations may also occur within one and the same social-economic system, during transition from one phase or stage of its development to another. Such, for example, is the transition from pre-monopoly capitalism to monopoly capitalism, or imperialism. But this is not a social revolution because the basic features of capitalism, its main pillars, continue to exist. Revolution, on the other hand, "...is a change which breaks the old order to its very foundations...".[1]

Social revolution implies a qualitative leap in the development of society resulting in the replacement of one social-economic formation by another.

The replacement of social-economic formations is a complex and lengthy process involving changes in the material and technical base of class society, in its economic system, political life, ideology and culture. These transformations do not occur simultaneously and not always in the same sequence. Many of them belong not to the revolution itself but to the process of its preparation or spontaneous maturing.

The appearance of new productive forces in the old society, changes in the economy and the disposition of the class forces, the growth of contradictions between new elements in social life and the obsolete social-political system, awareness of these contradictions among individuals and classes—all these are different aspects of the process that leads up to a social revolution. The revolution itself is a phase in the development of society when, as Lenin put it, "the numerous contradictions which slowly accumulate during periods of so-called peaceful development become resolved".[2]

What are these contradictions? First of all, the contradictions between the new productive forces and the obsolete production relations, and, secondly, between the new elements in the economic system of society (in its basis) and the old constitutional and legal superstructure, and also between various sections of the superstructure itself.

The deepest cause of social revolutions lies in the contradictions between the new productive forces and the obsolete production relations. New production relations corresponding to the character of the new productive forces are usually conceived in the old system.

The development of new economic relations undermines the obsolescent economic system from within. But the latter does not dis-

[1] V. I. Lenin, *The Importance of Gold Now and After the Complete Victory of Socialism*, Vol. 33, p. 110.

[2] V. I. Lenin, *Against Boycott. Notes of a Social-Democratic Publicist*, Vol. 13, p. 37.

appear of itself, because it has behind it the obsolescent classes, which make every effort to retain their positions. The feudal system in France, for example, at the end of the 18th century was riddled with decay, and yet the landlord class, which had huge estates, privileges and political power, did everything it could to preserve the system. There had to be a revolution to sweep away the old economic and political order, which was preventing the development of the new productive forces and bourgeois relations.

Thus the conflict between the productive forces and the production relations manifests itself in the *clash of classes*. Some classes defend the obsolescent production relations and the social-political system which is founded upon them, while others seek to abolish them. The revolutionary classes destroy the outdated political superstructure, abolish the old state power and create a new one. They use this power to complete the break-up of the old production relations and reinforce the new.

The social revolution carries out fundamental transformations in the main spheres of social life, economic and political. Revolution also involves more or less profound changes in the intellectual life of society, in its culture. Admittedly, not all revolutions have completely solved these problems. As we shall see below, the correlation of economic, political and cultural changes in the course of revolutions of various types is not always the same.

In the *economic* field the main purpose of the social revolution is to resolve the conflict between the developing productive forces and the obsolete relations of production, to replace the old system of economy with a new and higher one. The main requisite for this is a complete change in the relations of ownership of the means of production. "Whenever classes displaced each other, they changed property relations."[1]

In the *political* field the revolution resolves the conflict between the obsolete political superstructure and the emerging new economic relations or urgent needs of economic development. It creates the new political and legal superstructure required to reinforce and develop the emergent social-economic formation.

The main feature of revolution is the transfer of state power from one class to another. This is the primary distinction between revolution and all kinds of *coups d'état*, or palace revolutions, which do not uproot the power of this or that class, but merely replace the governing groups or individuals.

Not every transfer of power from one class to another, however,

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Ninth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.), March 29-April 5, 1920*, Vol. 30, p. 457.

may be described as revolution. If an obsolete class again assumes power, having temporarily regained the upper hand, this is not revolution, but *counter-revolution*, or the restoration of the old order.

In bourgeois philosophy and sociology this fundamental distinction is usually deliberately ignored. A West German philosophical dictionary, for example, defines revolution as a sudden, violent change in the existing social-political system, as opposed to evolution, gradual change.[1] Although revolution is indeed the opposite of evolution, the fundamental fault in this definition is that it does not make any distinction between revolution and counter-revolution. Another fault in this and similar definitions is that they equate revolution and "violent change", which implies an armed seizure of power.

Of course, any revolution overthrows the power of the obsolete class, which never relinquishes it voluntarily, and in this sense, as historical experience has shown, revolution is impossible without the use of some kind of force. But force may be applied in various forms and does not necessarily presuppose armed struggle. Everything depends on the specific conditions in which the revolution is carried out.

In general, the concept of revolution is not to be identified with the concepts of "armed uprising" or "civil war". Although the majority of revolutions have involved armed conflict between classes, history provides examples of armed uprisings and civil wars (for example, the Wars of the Roses in England) which could not be called revolutions because their purpose was not to establish a new social-economic system. On the other hand, revolutions are possible without either armed uprising or civil war.

Social revolution may be realised in various forms but its content is always the destruction of the obsolete social-economic and political system and its replacement by a new system.

The development of revolution depends on the course of the class struggle, on what forces gain the upper hand and to what extent the revolutionary classes are capable of pursuing their historical goals to final realisation. History has recorded the ebb and flow of revolutions, the periods of their decisive victories as well as instances of the temporary triumph of reaction and restoration of the old order. A striking example is the history of France, where the tasks of bourgeois-democratic transformation took nearly a century to complete, beginning with the revolution of 1789 to

[1] See *A Dictionary of Philosophy* (compiled by G. Schmidt), Moscow, 1961, p. 500 (in Russian).

1794 and ending with the revolutions of 1830 and 1848.

The development of the revolutionary process is further complicated by the interplay of internal and external contradictions. The main source of revolution is the internal contradictions between the antagonistic classes, but this does not imply that external contradictions, i.e., contradictions between states, are of no significance. The latter always have some kind of influence on internal contradictions, they may intensify them, speed up or slow down the development of the revolutionary crisis. Certain revolutions, such as national-liberation revolutions, which are aimed against the dual oppression of foreign exploiters and reactionary classes within the country, the allies and social bastion of external oppression, seek to resolve both internal and external contradictions.

Revolutions differ from one another in their *character* and *driving forces*.

The *character* of revolution is determined by what social contradictions it resolves and what kind of social system it establishes. Why, for example, was the Russian revolution of 1905-1907 bourgeois in character, although its leader was the proletariat and not the bourgeoisie? Because its aims were the overthrow of the autocratic system and destruction of the vestiges of the feudal relations, and these are the aims of a bourgeois revolution.

The *driving forces* of a revolution are the classes that carry it out, drive it forward and overcome the resistance of the obsolete classes. They depend not only on the character of the revolution but also on the specific historical conditions in which it occurs. Revolutions may be of the same type and character, but owing to differences of historical conditions they may differ profoundly from one another in their driving forces. For example, the driving force of the bourgeois revolutions of the 17th and 18th centuries in the West European countries included the peasantry, the plebeian sections of the urban population, the emergent working class and the petty bourgeoisie of the cities. The bourgeoisie was not only a driving force but also the leader of these revolutions. But in the revolution of 1905-1907 and the February revolution of 1917 in Russia the bourgeoisie, far from being the leader of the revolution, was not even one of its driving forces. The driving forces of the bourgeois revolution in Russia were the proletariat and the peasantry, with the proletariat exercising the leadership.

Some bourgeois ideologists assert that revolutions are always carried out by a minority, by small groups of revolutionaries and not by the masses. These views coincide with the ideas of the petty-bourgeois ultra-"left" revolutionaries, who reduce preparations for a revolution to conspiracy by a revolutionary minority. The ac-

tive revolutionary minority, of course, may be a catalyst of revolution, but without popular support revolution inevitably turns into a *putsch* or *coup d'état*. Only the masses can bring a revolution to completion.

In some bourgeois revolutions the masses advance their own independent demands and their struggle leaves a deep imprint on the course of events; such revolutions are called bourgeois-democratic revolutions. They differ from other bourgeois revolutions not in their character but in the degree of involvement of the masses in active independent struggle. Such, for example, were the revolution of 1905-1907 and the February revolution of 1917 in Russia. At the same time there have been bourgeois revolutions (for example in Turkey, in 1908, and in Portugal, in 1910) in which the masses of the people took no active or independent part. Such revolutions do not usually leave a deep mark in history. But in some cases a revolution, beginning as an "upper-crust" revolution, may become in the course of its development a profound and historically significant event because it sets in motion the broad masses of the people.

For the masses to become involved in revolutionary struggle they must appreciate the necessity of overthrowing the old system. So in periods of revolution new revolutionary ideas reflecting the historical problems that are ripe for solution acquire a special importance. These ideas help to mobilise the masses and weld them into a political army capable of breaking the resistance of the obsolete classes. Consequently, a political upheaval is usually preceded by an *ideological upheaveal*—a profound change in the consciousness and mood of the masses. Such a revolution in men's minds occurred, for example, on the eve of the Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia, when the slogan "All power to the Soviets! " took possession of the consciousness of millions of the working people.

The question arises as to whether there must be a revolution in order to resolve social contradictions. Cannot they be resolved by means of reforms,. partial concessions on the part of the ruling classes, by means of gradual change? The opponents of revolution regard reforms as salvation from revolution. They deny the law-governed character of revolutions and see them merely as a result of the mistakes of the ruling circles, who failed to make the necessary concessions to the revolutionaries in time. Thus, Winston Churchill explained the events of 1789 in France as being due to the fact that the monarchy had been unable to set the country's administration in order.

The possibility of temporarily softening or damping down social contradictions by means of reforms, does not however remove their

source, does not resolve fundamental social contradictions, but only postpones their ultimate solution.

Historical experience shows that the transition from one social-economic formation to another is in essence a revolution, although it may assume various forms and achieve its aims in different ways. The bourgeois revolution in England, for instance, ended in a compromise between the bourgeoisie and the feudal aristocracy, whereas in France feudalism was smashed in a decisive assault.

If reforms are used by the defenders of the old system to prevent its downfall, does this mean that revolutionaries must be opponents of all reform? Of course, not. There are different kinds of reform. The reformists, the right-wing socialists counterpose reforms to revolution and regard reform as an end in itself, thus trying by means of reform to divert the working people from the class struggle and corrupt the forces of revolution. Revolutionaries, on the other hand, regard reforms in the conditions of capitalism *as a by-product of the revolutionary struggle* and use them to develop and expand this struggle, subordinating reforms to the basic tasks of the revolution.

In our time, when the world socialist system has acquired solid shape and exerts ever increasing influence on the course of world history, when capitalism has been considerably weakened, the bourgeoisie's fear of social revolution compels it in certain cases to make concessions to the working class. In many countries conditions have arisen that have enabled the working class to force the bourgeoisie to take steps whose scale and significance go beyond the limits of ordinary reforms. This facilitates further progress and helps to rally the broad mass of the working people round the working class for the victory of the socialist revolution.

After this victory the relationship between reforms and revolution changes considerably. The victorious revolutionary class uses reforms as well as revolutionary methods to deal with the tasks confronting it. Whenever circumstances so require, reforms allow it to play for time, to gain a breathing-space in order to prepare an offensive, to demoralise the enemies of the revolution and win over or neutralise the waverers.

We have dealt with the causes that give rise to social revolutions and make them a historical necessity. This allows us to answer the question: Will there always be revolutions?

Just as classes, the class struggle and the state will not last forever, so the development of society need not always proceed through social revolutions. This was foreseen by Marx, when more than a 100 years ago he wrote in *The Poverty of Philosophy*: "It is only in an order of things in which there are no more classes and

class antagonisms that *social evolutions* will cease to be *political revolutions.*"[1] The contradictions arising in socialist society are resolved without social revolution. This does not, of course, rule out qualitative leap, revolutionary changes in science and technology, in the development of the productive forces of society; these are bound to take place, but do not lead to political upheavals, to social revolutions.

2. Historical Types of Revolution

The transition from one formation to another always comes about in its own special way, depending on what formation is dying and what formation is coming into being. The historical types of revolution differ accordingly. The division of revolutions into different types is based, first, upon the character of the historical tasks they are called upon to perform (which system they overthrow and which they establish) and, second, upon their class content. When discussing the question of the type of revolution we always speak of what class it is made by and whose interests it promotes. In their turn revolutions of one and the same type (or character) may differ in respect of their form, driving forces, degree of decisiveness, etc.

The first replacement of one social-economic formation by another was the transition from the primitive communal system to the slave-owning system (and in some countries later, directly to the feudal system). The peculiar feature of this transition was that it replaced the pre-class society with a class society.

A number of scientists, including the American anthropologist Lewis Henry Morgan, whose work was highly valued by Marx and Engels, believed that this change was evolutionary, i.e., did not involve revolution. But a different answer to the question was given by Engels in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State.* He showed that class division, which had gradually formed in the primitive communal system, finally led to a revolutionary upheaval that ended the remaining tribal relationships. The power of the tribal nobility was overthrown. Where these transformations took a revolutionary course the development of society was more rapid, and where the vestiges of the tribal system were preserved and gradually adapted to the new conditions, social relations were generally stagnant.

In the slave-owning form of society that supplanted the primi-

[1] K. Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy,* Vol. 6, p. 212.

tive communal system the basic antagonistic contradiction between the slave-owner and the slave was supplemented by the antagonism between the big landowners and money-lenders and the small peasant farmers and artisans. These contradictions engendered revolutionary movements of the peasants and other free men with a small amount of property. These movements quite often resulted in reforms, which the ruling classes were compelled to concede.

Another channel of revolutionary movement in the slave-owning world was the struggle of the slaves against their oppressors. The biggest of these movements were usually combined with the struggle of the poor. Examples are to be found in the uprisings of slaves in Sicily, the Aristonicus uprising in Asia Minor, that of Savmak in the Bosphorus Kingdom, and that of the "red brows" in China, etc. The greatest of the uprisings of ancient times was the Spartacus movement (74-71 B.C.), in which more than 100,000 slaves took part. The revolutionary movements of slaves and poor men undermined the slave-owning system but did not culminate in a victorious revolution that could sweep away this system and replace it with another, higher system.

Although the preconditions were present in ancient society for the transition to feudalism, this clange was held up by lack of a revolutionary class capable of bringing it about.

For this reason the crisis in the slave-owning system in some states usually led to their being enslaved by other, more powerful states that subsequently themselves entered a period of crisis. The greatest of these states, the Roman Empire, weakened internally by the rebellions of slaves and coloni, collapsed under the onslaught of the surrounding barbaric tribes.

Despite these individual features, however, the transition from slave-owning to feudal society confirms the general proposition that the replacement of one social-economic formation by another does not come about by evolution but demands a fundamental break-up of the obsolete order. In this particular case the demolition was carried out by barbaric tribes supported from within by the lower orders of slave-owning society.

The history of feudal society also recorded a number of revolutionary movements that did not culminate in victorious social revolutions of the period of ascendant feudalism. These included the peasant rebellion led by Wat Tyler (1381) in England, the peasant movement known as the "Jacquerie" (1358) in France, and the Dolcino uprising (1304-1307) in Italy.

The peasant movements achieved a higher stage of development than those of the slaves but their weakness also lay in their spontaneity and lack of organisation. The time for the replacement of feu-

dalism by capitalism was not yet ripe. Nor was there a class that could lead the peasants. The most decisive rebellions against feudalism involved movements not only of the oppressed peasantry but of the lower orders of the urban population—the apprentices, the poor. But the poor of the cities were too weak, disorganised and ignorant to become the leader of the peasantry.

The class that was needed came into being only when capitalist relations began to take shape within feudal society, when the feudal system became a barrier to the development of the productive forces and entered a period of profound crisis. It was in this period (varying chronologically in different countries) that the preconditions for *bourgeois revolutions* began to mature.

The revolutions of the epoch of the crisis of feudalism and ascending development of capitalism were led by the urban bourgeoisie, which in some cases achieved victory through compromise with the feudal aristocracy, and in others fought on to accomplish its complete overthrow. The fighting force of these revolutions was the peasantry together with the poor people of the cities. Therefore at the peak of their development such revolutions went much further than the goals set by the bourgeoisie.

A specific feature of bourgeois revolutions is that they move comparatively fast, their chief aim being to bring the political superstructure into accord with the capitalist system of economy already developing within feudal society, and to secure the necessary conditions for its unhindered development. For this reason bourgeois revolutions usually end in the conquest of political power by the bourgeoisie.

Because of the unevenness of historical development bourgeois revolutions occur in different countries at different times. This leads to differences in the positions taken up by the bourgeoisie, which may be either revolutionary or counter-revolutionary. The bourgeoisie in general is afraid of the revolutionary masses and this fear leads it to avoid a decisive clash with the feudal aristocracy. This tendency is particularly strong in the later bourgeois revolutions, when the revolutionary proletariat has already taken shape and is advancing its own independent demands. In these conditions the bourgeoisie cannot make a decisive attack on the landowners for fear of the revolutionary spirit of the proletariat; it is afraid that a mass attack by the people on feudal property may become the prologue to an attack on capitalist property.

The unevenness of historical development has yet another effect. Besides the developed capitalist countries, where the bourgeoisie becomes a counter-revolutionary force, there are many underdeveloped countries where the national bourgeoisie may still, despite its

hesitations and inconsistency, act as a comparatively revolutionary force in the struggle against imperialism and the feudal forces within the country.

The *socialist revolution*, which brings about the transition from capitalism to socialism, is a fundamentally new type of revolution. Its aim is not to replace one form of exploitation by another, but to sweep away exploitation altogether and to put a class society on the road of transformation into a classless society.

The tasks of the socialist revolution are incomparably more complicated and profound than those of all previous revolutions. It is for this reason that it sets in motion such great masses of people, far greater than any other revolution before. Its driving forces are the proletariat, the leader of revolution, and numerous sections of the working and exploited masses. Leading as it does today both the revolutionary-democratic and the socialist transformations, the proletariat establishes a firm alliance with the broadest masses of people, particularly with the working peasants and the working intelligentsia.

In the political field the socialist revolution puts the working class in power and establishes its dictatorship (state control). This entails not only removing the bourgeoisie from its position of control over society but also smashing the whole of the old state machinery, which was designed to oppress the working people, and replacing it with a fundamentally new government organisation.

The winning of political power, however, is not the completion of the socialist revolution but only its beginning. Political power is used to bring about a fundamental transformation of society, its economy and culture. The new state power not only destroys the obsolete system as in previous revolutions; it also builds a new society.

"One of the fundamental differences between bourgeois revolution and socialist revolution," wrote Lenin, "is that for the bourgeois revolution, which arises out of feudalism, the new economic organisations are gradually created within the old order, gradually changing all the aspects of feudal society. The bourgeois revolution faced only one task—to sweep away, to cast aside, to destroy all the fetters of the preceding social order. By fulfilling this task every bourgeois revolution fulfils all that is required of it; it accelerates the growth of capitalism.

"The socialist revolution is in an altogether different position.... New incredibly difficult tasks, organisational tasks, are added to the tasks of destruction."[1]

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Extraordinary Seventh Congress of the R.C.P.(B.), March 6-8, 1918*, Vol. 27, p. 89.

The building of the socialist economy begins after the proletariat has won political power. Moreover, if the socialist revolution is victorious in countries that inherited from the old system an economic backwardness (as was the case in most countries now forming the world socialist system), it must in addition to coping with the tasks of the socialist reorganisation of the economy also set about creating and fully developing a large-scale industry that constitutes the material and technical base of socialism.

Besides transforming the economy, the socialist revolution introduces radical changes in the cultural field. The cultural revolution, which is an inseparable part of the socialist revolution, faces the vital task of creating a new socialist culture and shaping its own intelligentsia. Countries with a cultural lag inherited from the old system must in addition cope with considerable tasks in raising the general cultural level of the people (abolishing illiteracy, introduction of general education, and so on).

A political revolution can be carried out in a few weeks, months or perhaps years, but the socialist transformation of the economy demands a much longer period (in the USSR it took approximately two decades after the victory of the revolution in October 1917). The cultural revolution is even more prolonged. Its task is not to throw aside the precious works of culture created by mankind, including those of bourgeois society, but to master them. By critically assimilating all that is best in the culture of the past the proletariat creates on this basis its own socialist culture and fosters large numbers of socialist intellectuals.

3. Objective Conditions and the Subjective Factor of Revolution

A revolution can succeed only when the maturity of its objective conditions coincides with the vigorous activity of the progressive forces, of the classes fighting for the realisation of their interests.

The existence of objective conditions for a revolution means that it must proceed according to certain laws. Social revolutions are not made "to order". The revolutionary party or group cannot call them into being at its own discretion. It is only the Blanquists, the anarchists and other ultra-"left" elements who imagine that revolutions can be brought about in any place at any time.

One of the *objective conditions for a revolution* is a crisis in the obsolete system, aggravation of all its contradictions. The objective preconditions of revolution are not only economic. They

include social-political conditions, and above all the development of class contradictions, a favourable balance of class forces. Treating the objective preconditions of revolution as purely economic leads to vulgar economism, to an opportunist inaction that is as false as the idealist views of the "lefts", to the wrong conclusion that the maturing of revolution is automatically determined by the degree of development of the productive forces.

Revolution becomes possible and inevitable when the contradictions between classes grow extremely acute. It is not therefore produced automatically by a conflict between the productive forces and production relations. Such a conflict has for long existed in the main capitalist countries, but this is not to say that all the objective conditions for revolution exist there. To make a revolution possible there must also be a *revolutionary situation*, which comes about in various countries according to the specific economic and political circumstances.

A revolutionary situation is a build-up of social-political conditions necessary for revolution. Its symptoms may change at various stages in history, but in all cases it presupposes a profound crisis of the old system. Lenin defined these symptoms as follows: (1) a crisis among the "upper classes", a crisis in the policy of the ruling classes, when it is impossible for them to maintain their rule without any change, (2) the suffering and want of the oppressed classes have grown more acute than usual and (3) as a consequence of the above causes, there is a considerable increase in the activity of the masses, who uncomplainingly allow themselves to be robbed in "peace time", but, in turbulent times, are drawn by all the circumstances into independent historical action.[1]

Although some symptoms of a revolutionary situation may be connected with the level of revolutionary consciousness of the masses (heightening of their activity), *a revolutionary situation is an objective condition of revolution.*

Some advocates of "left" views maintain that a revolutionary situation can be created by resolute action on the part of only small groups of revolutionaries, for example, by the declaration of guerilla warfare against a reactionary regime. But the actual fate of the guerilla units, no matter how bold and self-sacrificing they may be, depends on whether they gain the support of the broad masses. The resolute actions of revolutionaries can provide the impulse that is needed to accelerate the maturing of a revolutionary situation only if a sufficient amount of "inflammable material" has

[1] See V. I. Lenin, *The Collapse of the Second International*, Vol. 21, pp. 213-14.

been piled up, if there are corresponding objective conditions.

A revolutionary situation may be brought about by various causes: economic shocks, failures of government policy, such as the collapse of a military adventure, national or racial conflicts leading to a sharp aggravation of social contradictions, and so on. In a number of cases revolutionary situations grow out of wars (for example, the revolutions of 1905 and 1917 in Russia), although war is by no means an obligatory condition of the revolutionary situation.[1]

The present epoch introduces many new features into the process of the maturing of a revolutionary situation. This process is strongly influenced by the general change in the balance of forces in favour of socialism, the weakening of world capitalism and the disintegration of its colonial system. The existence of the world system of socialism, on the one hand, objectively aggravates the contradictions of capitalism, thus favouring the development of revolutionary situations and, on the other hand, influences by its example the development of the subjective factor of revolution. But when all is said and done, the ripening of revolutionary situations in individual countries is mainly determined by the development of their internal, class, and external contradictions.

Marxists acknowledge that "a revolution can only be made by the masses, actuated by profound *economic* needs".[2] But they do not think of poverty and hardship of the oppressed classes in terms of absolute impoverishment. They know that by its struggle the working class is capable of successfully resisting the trend towards such impoverishment. But even in these conditions there is a relative impoverishment. As Lenin observed, "...poverty grows, not in the physical but in the social sense, i.e., in the sense of the disparity between the increasing level of consumption by the bourgeoisie and consumption by society as a whole, and the level of the living standards of the working people".[3] Finally, poverty not only in the social but in the direct physical sense remains in a number of countries (particularly the less developed ones) and in various districts and also among some sections of the working population (even in the most developed countries).

[1] We should also bear in mind that whereas in the past some wars accelerated revolution and a transition to a new social system, in the context of the present day, when the destructive force of weapons has grown to colossal proportions, the situation is different inasmuch as thermonuclear war can lead to the annihilation of all life on Earth.

[2] V. I. Lenin, *Plekhanov and Vasilyev*, Vol. 11, p. 423.

[3] V. I. Lenin, *Review. Karl Kautsky, "Bernstein und das sozialdemokratische Programm. Eine Antikritik"*, Vol. 4, p. 201.

Although it does encourage the growth of the production potential, the scientific and technological revolution in capitalist countries brings new hardships to the working people. Automation increases unemployment and the instability of the workers's position; it leads to a more intensive exploitation of those who are employed. All this taken together gives rise to particularly stubborn and prolonged forms of struggle between labour and capital.

State-monopoly capital is able in a number of cases to keep up the rate of growth of production and even to buffer certain crisis phenomena by means of militarisation of the economy, which is a characteristic feature of modern capitalism. This determines to some extent the stubborn resistance offered by the most reactionary forces of imperialism (particularly the so-called military-industrial complex) to the political and military détente that the forces of socialism and progress seek to achieve. The aggressive nature of imperialism has not changed but in present-day conditions the arms race and wars are becoming increasingly dangerous for imperialism itself. This prompts a part of the bourgeoisie, including some of its ruling circles, to look for a more realistic line in international relations.

However, no manoeuvring, even the most skilful, can eliminate the basic economic and social contradictions of capitalism, and the soil that breeds revolutions cannot disappear even in contemporary capitalist conditions. Life has exploded one of the biggest myths created by the reformists and bourgeois ideologists—the myth that capitalism is capable of freeing itself from crises. Capitalism's instability is becoming increasingly obvious. Capitalism is a society with no future.

The revolutionary situation is an essential but not sufficient condition for a social revolution.

For a revolution to take place, and particularly for it to achieve victory, there must be something else besides objective conditions. As Lenin observed, there were revolutionary situations in Russia both in 1859-1861 and in 1879-1880, but no revolutions occurred in those years. There was a revolutionary situation in Russia in 1905, but the revolution that occurred was defeated.

The defeat of a revolution may be due to several causes, including an unfavourable balance of class forces. But even with the balance well in its favour a revolution will not be victorious if there is not a sufficiently mature *subjective factor*. For a revolution to be victorious the revolutionary class must be capable of sufficiently strong and resolute revolutionary action because the power of the obsolete classes will never collapse of its own accord.

The elements of the subjective factor of revolution include the

following: (1) revolutionary consciousness of the masses, their readiness and determination to carry through the struggle to the end, (2) organisation of the masses and their vanguard, which makes it possible to concentrate all forces capable of fighting for the victory of revolution, and to act together and not in scattered groups, (3) leadership of the masses by a party sufficiently experienced and trained in battle and capable of evolving a correct strategy and tactics of struggle and putting them into practice.

Thus, *social revolution demands unity of objective and subjective conditions.* This law of social revolution has been confirmed, as Lenin noted, by all revolutions and particularly by the three Russian revolutions of the 20th century.

The main cause of defeat of the revolutionary movement in a number of European capitalist countries at the end of the First World War was, according to the Comintern appraisal, the absence in these countries of mass communist parties capable of leading into action the masses that had spontaneously risen against those who were to blame for the war. Hence the 5th Congress of the Communist International drew the conclusion that in the conditions of the deepening crisis of capitalism "the 'subjective factor', i.e., the degree of organisation of the proletarian ranks and their communist vanguards (parties) is the central question of the whole historical epoch".[1]

In the stage of imperialism the world capitalist system as a whole is fully ripe for socialist revolution, which becomes practically inevitable. Thus the role of the subjective factor increases. This is due, first, to the greater degree of maturity of the objective conditions for socialist revolution and the transition to socialism and, second, to the activisation of the bourgeois political and ideological superstructure with the help of which the bourgeoisie tries to prolong its supremacy while all the contradictions of imperialism grow more intense.

In view of the new historical conditions Lenin produced a comprehensive study of the role of the subjective factor in the struggle for effecting a socialist revolution, including the theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the working-class party, its strategy and tactics, and the significance of organisation of the working class and its allies.

Some contemporary bourgeois ideologists regard acknowledgement of the growing role of the subjective factor in our day as a justification of subjectivism. But Leninism acknowledges the growing

[1] *Communist International in Documents, 1919-1932*, Moscow, 1933, p. 403 (in Russian).

role of the subjective factor in its connection with the maturing of objective conditions for a revolution. Moreover, it links this growing role with the organisation and attraction of the masses into the active revolutionary struggle under the leadership of the Marxist party. The "left" adventurists, however, grant the determining role to the subjective factor and urge the making of a revolution without regard for actual conditions. What is more, they reduce the subjective factor to the activity of groups of conspirators, of a revolutionary minority whom they credit with being capable of making a revolution at any time they wish. However, the general maturity of the objective conditions for a socialist revolution in the present epoch by no means signifies that there is always a revolutionary situation ready to be exploited at any time in any country. No one can ignore the basic law of social revolution, which demands unity of objective conditions and the subjective factor.

4. Character of the Contemporary World Revolutionary Process

One of the features of the socialist revolution that distinguishes it from previous revolutions is that its law-governed tendency is to become a *world revolutionary process.*

In the part, too, as history became world history, i.e., as the connections and relations between various nations developed, revolutions occurred that acquired world significance and exercised a revolutionary influence on many other countries. Most typical in this respect was the 1789-1794 revolution in France, which influenced the history of other countries of Europe and America. But it is only in the epoch of the incipient collapse of imperialism that revolutions in various countries, despite their occurring at different times, have merged into a single and truly world revolutionary process, which is forging ahead not on a bourgeois but on a proletarian basis.

As historical experience has shown, the development of the revolutionary process in the epoch of imperialism proceeds unevenly. Whereas in the 19th century it could have been assumed that socialist revolutions would occur simultaneously, or almost simultaneously, in all the main capitalist countries (England, France, Germany, the USA, etc.), the 20th century has revealed a great unevenness in the maturing of revolutions in various countries. In some of the most developed capitalist countries the maturing of the forces for socialist revolution is slowing down because the bourgeoisie has succeeded in splitting the working-class movement and creating a sec-

tion of working-class aristocracy and bureaucracy. And in some of the less developed capitalist countries, where the working class and other sections of the working people have experienced double or triple oppression, the class contradictions and class struggle are assuming more acute forms with the result that these countries are more mature politically for revolution. This leads to the formation of *weak links* in the chain of imperialism, links which can be broken sooner than others. Which countries turn out to be such weak links depends both on internal (weakness of the bourgeois positions in these countries, strength of the working class and its allies, and so on) and external factors.

As far back as 1915 Lenin drew the conclusion that in the epoch of imperialism a socialist revolution could be victorious at first in some or even in one, separate country, and that the simultaneous victory of socialist revolution in all capitalist countries was impossible. Sure enough, the weakening of the bastions of world capitalism allowed the revolutionary forces to break the front of imperialism first in Russia, and then in a number of countries of Europe and Asia, and in Latin America—in Cuba.

Proceeding from this fact, the opponents of Marxism-Leninism assert that revolutions have not occurred where they "ought" to have occurred according to Marx.

In actual fact neither Marx nor his followers believed that it could be stated for all time in what sequence revolutions would take place in various countries. In the conditions of pre-monopoly capitalism Marx expected that revolution would occur first of all in the most developed capitalist countries, where the material preconditions of revolution had most matured. But at the same time he allowed the possibility of socialist revolution in the relatively backward Germany of those days, if the revolution of the proletariat was supported there by "a second edition of peasant war".

In the conditions of imperialism, when the world system of capitalism has in general matured for socialist revolution, the possibilities of victory for the proletariat in the less developed capitalist countries have also expanded.

The historical experience of the October Revolution in Russia has overthrown the assertions of the dogmatists of the Second International that revolutions are possible only in the developed capitalist countries. But from this experience the "lefts" have drawn the wrong conclusion that backwardness is a driving force of revolution. When Bukharin in his book *The Economics of the Transitional Period* maintained that the world revolutionary process begins from the lowest national-economic systems, that the speed of the onset of revoluton is inversely proportional to the maturity

of capitalist relations, Lenin rightly opposed this point of view. He underlined the passage, quoted from Bukharin's book, and wrote in the margin that instead of "from the lowest" one should say "not from the highest", and instead of "inversely proportional"—"not directly proportional".[1]

There is no direct ratio between the rates of maturing of socialist revolution in various countries and the level of their economic development. The speed of the onset of revolution in one country or another is not determined solely by the level of its economic development, but depends primarily on the degree of aggravation of class contradictions. What is more, if socialist revolutions are delayed for some reason in the most developed capitalist countries, it by no means follows that they must begin first of all in the less developed countries. Socialist revolution is possible only if there is a properly formed and sufficiently powerful working class—the chief driving force and leader of the revolutionary assault. This condition does not exist in the most backward countries. With regard to Russia Lenin stated quite definitely that "without a certain degree of capitalism we should not have managed it".[2]

Russia was a country with an average level of development of capitalism. State-monopoly capitalism had already gained some ground, and a strong working class, the most revolutionary in the world, had taken shape. By 1915 about 60 per cent of the workers were concentrated at large enterprises where the workers were distinguished by their revolutionary activity and organisation. Finally, the working class of Russia had numerous allies, especially the semi-proletarian masses of town and country and the toiling peasantry who suffered from both capitalist and landowner oppression.

Analysing the experience of the Great October Socialist Revolution, Lenin observed that for Russia, in view of a whole series of objective conditions and subjective preconditions, it was easier to begin a revolution than for the West. At the same time he often stressed the serious danger that lurked in the country's backwardness, the danger of petty-bourgeois influences and great difficulties in coping with the tasks of socialist construction. "...A backward country can easily begin because its adversary has become rotten, because its bourgeoisie is not organised, but for it to continue demands of that country a hundred thousand times more circumspection, caution and endurance."[3]

The existence of the world's first socialist country, its support of

[1] *Lenin Miscellany XI*, p. 398.
[2] Ibid., p. 397.
[3] V. I. Lenin, *Session of the All-Russia C.E.C. April 29, 1918*, Vol. 27, p. 291.

the revolutionary forces of other countries, and the weakening of world imperialism subsequently created the possibility of winning power in countries where the level of economic development was considerably lower than in pre-revolutionary Russia. As experience has shown, after the democratic aims had been achieved the gradual movement of such countries towards socialism became entirely feasible provided that the positions of the working class were reinforced and there was cooperation with the more developed socialist countries.

When the front of imperialism has been broken in one country, and particularly when it is broken in several countries, the conditions for the spread of the liberation movement in other countries substantially change. Today "*imperialism can neither regain its lost historical initiative nor reverse world development. The main direction of mankind's development is determined by the world socialist system, the international working class, all revolutionary forces*".[1]

This provides more favourable conditions for the development of the revolutionary process, revealing opportunities for socialist changes even in small countries that in isolation would not have been able to muster sufficient forces for them.

The present epoch is not only an epoch of *socialist revolutions. Democratic* and *national-liberation revolutions* are also taking place in a number of countries. In favourable conditions they may grow into socialist revolutions.

The possibility of the growth of democratic revolutions into socialist revolutions was discovered even in the pre-imperialist epoch. Marx and Engels allowed the possibility that in countries where the realisation of democratic changes was delayed and capitalist relations had developed there could be a direct transition from democratic to socialist changes, carried out by means of uninterrupted revolution.

In the epoch of imperialism a direct transition from democratic to socialist changes, which was formerly regarded as an exception, becomes quite usual in countries where these democratic changes have still to be made.

The new correlation of democratic and socialist changes in the epoch of imperialism was analysed by Lenin in the years of the first Russian revolution. In this revolution it was the proletariat, not the bourgeoisie, that exercised leadership. The alliance of the working class and the peasantry under the leadership of the working class was the driving force of the revolution's development. But this alli-

[1] *International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties, Moscow, 1969*, Prague, 1969, p. 13.

ance is not always the same. Its class content changes according to the stages through which the revolution is passing. Lenin reached the conclusion that in a bourgeois-democratic revolution all sections of the peasantry are the allies of the working class, but in a socialist revolution the working class must rely on the peasant poor and fight to overthrow capitalism in alliance with the semi-proletarians of town and country. The leadership of the proletariat is the connecting link between these two stages of the revolution. The growth of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist revolution is reflected also in the political superstructure: the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry established in the first stage of the revolution grows into the socialist dictatorship of the proletariat.

Thus, the proletariat carries out the socialist as well as the bourgeois-democratic revolution not in isolation from but together with its class allies. This conclusion of Lenin's overthrew the precept of the opportunist leaders of the Second International, who repudiated the idea of proletarian leadership and alleged that the proletariat must act alone in the socialist revolution, without allies. Another notion based on this principle, the notion that the socialist revolution is possible only when the proletariat becomes the majority of the population, was also refuted. As Lenin showed, a socialist revolution is quite possible even in countries where the proletariat is in the minority but has allies in the shape of the working and exploited masses of people, the semi-proletarian sections of the urban and rural population. This prediction of Lenin's was confirmed by the victory of the socialist revolution in Russia and later in other countries.

The revolutions that took place at the close of and after the Second World War in a number of countries of Europe and Asia differed in many ways from the October 1917 Revolution in Russia. At the same time they confirmed the present-day tendency of democratic and socialist transformations to come together. The majority of the European countries where these revolutions occurred (with the exception of the German Democratic Republic and Czechoslovakia) had previously been agrarian countries in which capitalism was moderately developed. In some of the other countries there were still considerable vestiges of feudal relations. During the Second World War all these countries had lost their national independence and had either been occupied (Poland, Czechoslovakia, and others) or become fascist satellites. The upper crust of the ruling classes of these countries (landowners and big bourgeoisie) took the road of national betrayal and collaboration with fascism. For this reason the national-liberation struggle against

the fascist occupying forces tied in with the struggle against the internal reactionary forces. The defeat of fascism and the liberation of these countries resulted in the removal from power of the reactionary classes that had collaborated with fascism, while the peoples' revolutionary front, led by the working class, set up a people's democratic form of government.

The struggle to create a people's democracy brought wide sections of society together in their effort to achieve general democratic, anti-imperialist and anti-fascist aims (restoration of national independence, democratisation of the political system, etc.). Most of these countries also had to achieve anti-feudal aims, which were of considerable significance. Besides democratic reforms the people's democratic government immediately carried out a number of radical socialist measures (for example, the partial nationalisation of large-scale industry, banks, transport, etc.). But full-scale socialist tasks came to the forefront only as the revolution proceeded further.

Some democratic movements do not grow directly into socialist movements. Nevertheless they merge with the general flow of the anti-imperialist struggle, and become a part of the world revolutionary movement directed against imperialism and capitalism. How does this happen?

It happens mainly because dying capitalism displays increasing hostility towards democracy. Broad social strata that are interested in preserving and expanding democratic gains break away from the ruling monopolistic bourgeoisie and swing towards an alliance with the proletariat. Favourable circumstances are created for organising alliances between different social forces opposed to the monopolist upper crust. Irrespective of what subjective goals its participants may have, the struggle for the realisation of democratic aims is turning objectively more and more against capitalism.

This tendency also operates in the development of the national-liberation movements and revolutions, which play a tremendous part in the present age. Before the First World War and the October Socialist Revolution in Russia these movements were a part of the bourgeois-democratic revolutions against feudalism and its survivals. After the triumph of the Great October Socialist Revolution had initiated the downfall of imperialism, these movements became part of the general world revolutionary movement directed against imperialism.

The national-liberation revolutions are the result of the conflict between imperialism and its colonies and dependencies, between the forces interested in their national liberation and the pro-imperialist forces, the reactionary classes within these countries. The

conflict in the mode of production in most of these countries differs from what we find in the developed capitalist countries. It is a conflict between the vital need to overcome backwardness and the obsolete production relations that hinder the growth of the productive forces and have for long been artificially preserved and supported by imperialism. In many countries today the struggle for national liberation has begun to grow into a struggle against relations of exploitation, both feudal and capitalist.

Whereas the socialist revolutions in the capitalist countries deliver a frontal blow against imperialism, the national-liberation, anti-imperialist movements and revolutions in the colonial and dependent countries strike from the flank and rear and undermine the pillars of the imperialist colonial system.

These two types of contemporary revolution are interconnected and interdependent. The success of socialist revolutions has had, and is still having, a decisive influence on the development and intensification of the national-liberation movements.

No matter how great the significance of the national-liberation revolutions and the victories they have won, they cannot by themselves put an end to imperialism. The national-liberation movements, despite their tremendous role, cannot determine the basic line of development of the present epoch—the epoch of transition from capitalism to socialism—because they are democratic but not socialist in character.

The development of the world revolutionary process is both complex and contradictory. It shows a tendency to draw more new nations and countries and at the same time to increase the variety of types and forms of revolution. For this reason Lenin objected to the dogmatic notion that in all countries the development of the revolutions should proceed according to one and the same pattern. "All nations will arrive at socialism—this is inevitable, but all will do so in not exactly the same way, each will contribute something of its own to some form of democracy, to some variety of the dictatorship of the proletariat, to the varying rate of socialist transformations in the different aspects of social life. There is nothing more primitive from the viewpoint of theory, or more ridiculous from that of practice, than to paint, 'in the name of historical materialism', *this* aspect of future in a monotonous grey."[1]

History has shown the possibility of various types and forms of revolution aimed against capitalism or imperialism:

(1) socialist revolutions, which may be carried out in countries of

[1] V. I. Lenin, *A Caricature of Marxism and Imperialist Economism*, Vol. 23, pp. 69-70.

more or less developed capitalism;

(2) socialist revolutions that in the relatively less developed capitalist countries grow out of democratic revolutions, or that, besides achieving their basic socialist aims, also achieve certain as yet unachieved democratic aims (the Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia);

(3) socialist revolutions that grow out of national-democratic or national-liberation revolutions in countries with different levels of social-economic development, which owing to foreign domination have lost their national independence, or socialist revolutions that grow out of anti-fascist revolutions as a result of liberation from a fascist regime;

(4) socialist revolutions that develop in the capitalistically undeveloped or little developed countries with the support of more developed socialist countries out of the anti-imperialist struggle or a national-liberation revolution;

(5) national-liberation revolutions that form part of the world revolutionary process but do not grow immediately into socialist revolutions;

(6) democratic revolutionary movements aimed at limiting the power of the monopoly clique, at eliminating the dependence of the small producers (peasants, artisans) on the banks, big landowners, etc., and at overthrowing fascists and other tyrannical regimes; such movements may achieve no more than democratic aims or, if they develop further, socialist ones as well.

The great diversity of revolutionary processes enevitably gives rise to contradictions both within each of them and between them. These contradictions spring from the fact that countries at various levels of social-economic development and with different histories and national traditions are drawn into the revolutionary movement. Moreover, the very growth of the revolutionary movement, its expansion, also creates similar contradictions because it attracts more and more new sections of society and new peoples. Lenin warned against the sectarian tendency to avoid these contradictions by limiting the composition of revolutionary movements to "pure" supporters of socialism. He stressed that part of the petty bourgeoisie and the backward section of the workers would take part in the struggle against imperialist oppression and that without their participation no revolution would be possible, that "...just as inevitably will they bring into the movement their prejudices, their reactionary fantasies, their weaknesses and errors. But *objectively* they will attack *capital*, and the class-conscious vanguard of the revolution, the advanced proletariat, expressing this objective truth of a variegated and discordant, motley and outwardly fragmented mass

struggle, will be able to unite and direct it...."[1]

Imperialism tries to counterpose to the logic of the merging of the various streams of the revolutionary struggle the tactics of separating them, setting the various contingents of the world revolutionary movement against one another, splitting the socialist countries, making use of the nationalistic elements within these countries and of the right and "left" revisionists.

The tactics of imperialism is to spread disunity; the tactics of the proletariat is to unite the progressive social forces of all different types, and to use and deepen the contradictions of imperialism. In these circumstances proletarian internationalism becomes particularly significant and every Marxist-Leninist is duty bound to defend it.

In his speech at the Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties of Europe (Berlin, June 29-30, 1976) Leonid Brezhnev stressed: "It is especially important that while joining with broad democratic trends, including Social-Democrats and Christians, in the struggle against the reactionary forces of imperialism, the Communists should remain revolutionaries and convinced supporters of the replacement of the capitalist by the socialist system. All their activities are geared to solving this historic task."[2]

The process of liberating the peoples from imperialist oppression, as Lenin foresaw, extends over varying historical periods and takes various forms.

As more and more peoples embark on the struggle for socialism, the diversity of ways in which the common historic goals are achieved will grow. This is a manifestation of the diversity of the conditions of struggle against the common enemy—imperialism—and of the creative role of the masses, who in the course of the revolution transform social life.

[1] V. I. Lenin, *The Discussion on Self-Determination Summed Up*, Vol. 22, p. 356.

[2] *For Peace, Security, Cooperation and Social Progress in Europe. On the Results of the Conference of the Communist and Workers' Parties of Europe, Berlin, June 29-30, 1976*, Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, Moscow, 1976, p. 21.

Chapter XVI

THE STRUCTURE AND FORMS OF SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS

We now pass from analysing the laws of social development, of economic and political relations, to examining a very important sphere of social life—social consciousness.

When we speak of social consciousness we deliberately ignore everything individual and personal and consider the views and ideas that are characteristic of a given society as a whole or of some definite social group. Although social consciousness is directly or indirectly created by individuals, it never belongs to them exclusively but becomes the possession of the whole of society. Thus scientific discoveries and works of art belong to the whole of mankind. Just as society is not merely the sum total of the people of whom it consists, so social consciousness is not the sum total of the "consciousnesses" of individuals. It is something more than their sum, it is a qualitatively new intellectual system, which, although engendered and conditioned ultimately by social being, has a relatively independent existence and exerts a powerful influence on every individual, compelling him to reckon with the historically shaped forms of social consciousness as something that is real, although non-material.

The social consciousness in its historically shaped forms is a component part of the intellectual, spiritual culture of society. So we must first deal with the meaning of this concept.

1. The Concept of Intellectual Culture

In its generic sense the term "culture" means cultivation and is normally used in contrast to nature, regarded as things in their natural state, independent of man and his labour. By culture we mean above all the modes and results of man's activity, the values that he creates. Culture is usually divided into *material* and *intellectual* culture. This is a conventional division, because the making of tools and the objects generally required to satisfy man's material needs would be impossible without the participation of his thought. On the other hand, the products of intellectual effort—ideas, artistic images, social norms and rules—exist in a certain material form, in

manuscripts, books, paintings, music, drawings, and so on.

Intellectual culture comprises the results of the people's intellectual activities in the sphere of science, philosophy, art, morals and so on. But viewed in unity with people, with their consciousness and activities, these results are not just objects or memorials of culture, but the actual, living culture of society, characterising the level of its intellectual, aesthetic and moral development. Culture therefore presupposes the acquisition of knowledge and experience in one or another sphere of activity, the assimilation and adoption of a certain system of values, the evolution of certain norms of behaviour. Every individual from early youth is formed in a certain cultural environment comprising the objects, ideas, values and patterns of behaviour created by people. His very upbringing and education actually consist in assimilation of the knowledge, skills and abilities amassed by society, and also its intellectual values and standards of behaviour. The way education and upbringing are organised, the development of public education are important indices of the level of culture of a given society.

But people are not only consumers of the culture that has already been created and one of its products. They are also its creators. A peculiar feature of socialist society is that, on the basis of the elimination of poverty and exploitation and the old antithesis between mental and physical labour, the masses of the working people become more and more involved in creativity, in the creation of cultural values.

Spiritual culture bears the imprint of the characteristic features of the social-economic formation, the classes that have created it.

For this reason, in a society divided into antagonistic classes it cannot be regarded as an integral whole. "The *elements* of democratic and socialist culture," Lenin wrote, "are present, if only in rudimentary form, in *every* national culture, since in *every* nation there are toiling and exploited masses, whose conditions of life inevitably give rise to the ideology of democracy and socialism. But *every* nation also possesses a bourgeois culture (and most nations a reactionary and clerical culture as well) in the form, not merely of 'elements', but of the *dominant* culture."[1]

In creating its own culture, the working class does not throw aside the whole content of bourgeois culture. It is confronted with the task of mastering all the wealth of culture that mankind has produced in conditions of oppression by exploiters. "We must take the entire culture that capitalism left behind and build socialism with

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Critical Remarks on the National Question,* Vol. 20, p. 24.

it. We must take all its science, technology, knowledge and art."[1]

When charting the course of socialist construction, Lenin saw that a *cultural revolution* would be an essential part of this plan. Basically this meant a great upswing in public education, providing the broad masses with political and other knowledge, spreading scientific socialist ideology and overcoming the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois views and way of life.

Following Lenin's path, the Party has devoted enormous attention to raising the people's cultural level, creating new cultural values, giving people all-round development and communist education. As Soviet society develops, the whole socialist culture steadily rises to new heights on the ideological basis of Marxism-Leninism and in close connection with scientific and technological progress. The 25th Congress of the CPSU called for "a further rise in the role of *socialist culture and art* in the ideological-political, moral and aesthetic education of Soviet people, in forming their intellectual standards and expectations."[2]

The relations between classes leave a significant imprint on the intellectual culture of a class-divided society and ideology is an extremely important element in any culture. Culture also reflects the specific features of social psychology that are characteristic of a certain age or class.

2. Social Psychology and Ideology

The material economic relations, the social conditions in which people live, their everyday activity in the form of feelings, moods, thoughts, motives and habits. These are usually described as *social psychology*.

The growth of social psychology is directly influenced by the conditions of people's social existence, by their activities. Social psychology does not take the form of a generalised system of views, but manifests itself in emotions, feelings, moods, and so on. At the level of social psychology people's ideas and views have no theoretical expression, they tend to be empirical and the intellectual elements in them are mingled with the emotional elements. Social psychology is a part of people's *ordinary consciousness*.[3]

[1] V. I. Lenin, *The Achievements and Difficulties of the Soviet Government*, Vol. 29, p. 70.

[2] *Materialy XXV syezda KPSS* (Materials of the XXVth Congress of the C.P.S.U.), p. 221 (In Russian).

[3] The term "ordinary consciousness" is used in Marxist literature in a wider sense than the term "social psychology". "Ordinary consciousness"

The psychology of people in a class-divided society inevitably bears the stamp of the features of a particular class and expresses the conditions of its life. Even before the consciousness of a class becomes imbued with class ideology, its psychology exhibits certain features that sharply distinguish it from the consciousness of the class that opposes it.

There are psychological differences between classes whose relations are not antagonistic. For instance, in capitalist society there are differences between the psychology of the proletariat and that of the working peasantry. These differences are based on the latter's possession of private property, of which the proletariat has none, and also on the specific features of their labour and the resultant different conditions of life in town and country. The psychology of the intelligentsia also has its specific features, depending on the intellectual's social status and the character of his work. These features and the resultant differences in social psychology are gradually erased in socialist society through the elimination of exploiting classes, cooperative farming and the removal of the old antithesis between town and country, between mental and manual labour.

The classics of Marxism-Leninism paid close attention to the social psychology of the masses, particularly in the periods of revolutionary upswing and pointed out the tremendous part played by the masses' awareness of the injustice of the social system based on exploitation. Although such awareness cannot serve as a scientific proof of the necessity for a new system, it is an expression of the fact that the masses do not want to go on living in the old way, that the existing conditions have become intolerable and should be changed. A revolutionary party studies the state of the mass consciousness and strives to raise it to the level of political consciousness, that is, to give the masses a clear scientific explanation and evaluation of social processes and to organise the masses for struggle.

The specific features of the history of a given nation mark the psychology of the whole population of that country, of all its classes.

The differences peculiar to various ethnic groups in one or another class are conditioned by the specific features of national history. These differences concern certain traditions and features of mental make-up. The specific psychology of a nation, the individuality of the everyday life and customs of its various sections also manifest themselves in art, which expresses its specific features of

implies not only the reflection of the social conditions but also the results of the empirical observation of nature that man performs in the course of his everyday life, the knowledge and skills he acquires in the process of labour, and so on.

its artistic perception of reality, certain historically evolved aesthetic tastes, and so on.

Whereas social psychology is the ordinary consciousness that is shaped directly in the process of people's everyday activity and intercourse, *ideology* is a more or less coherent system of views, propositions and ideas (political, philosophical, moral, aesthetic and religious). It is based on a wider (generalised) social experience, both historical and contemporary. Ordinary consciousness takes shape of its own accord, spontaneously, in the process of people's life activity and interaction, whereas ideology is mainly the product of conscious activity, demanding special efforts on the part of ideologists.[1]

As regards their social status, the ideologists of a certain class need not necessarily belong to that class. But by expressing in the language of ideology the interests of a class they serve it and represent its intelligentsia. In the words of Lenin, "the intelligentsia are so called just because they most consciously, most resolutely and most accurately reflect and express the development of class interests and political groupings in society as a whole".[2]

Marx and Engels not infrequently used the term "ideology" to denote false, illusory consciousness. But they used it in regard to those ideological theories that considered thoughts and ideas as independent entities which supposedly develop independently and obey only their own intrinsic laws. They were referring to those ideologists who did not acknowledge or were not aware of the fact that the material conditions of the life of the people in whose heads the thinking process takes place ultimately determine the course of this process. Such an ideology, which implies an idealist interpretation of history, is in itself false consciousness and gives rise to mystifications and illusions. As for the ideology that guides the working class, the leader of the whole mass of the working people, it is characterised in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* in the following words: "The theoretical conclusions of the Communists are in no way based on ideas or principles that have been invented, or discovered, by this or that would-be universal reformer. They merely express, in general terms, actual relations springing from an existing class struggle, from a historical movement going on under our very eyes."[3]

[1] We say "mainly" because, for example, religion in primitive society arose in the undeveloped consciousness of primitive people and was undoubtedly spontaneous. It was only later that the spokesmen of religion—priests and theologists—formed these beliefs into a coherent system.

[2] V. I. Lenin, *The Tasks of the Revolutionary Youth*, Vol. 7, p. 45.

[3] K. Marx and F. Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Vol. 6, p. 498.

Marxism-Leninism therefore draws a distinction between scientific ideology, which is an accurate reflection of material social relations, and ideology that reflects these relations in an illusory, distorted and even fantastic form.

In class-divided society the decisive factor in determining how much truth there is in the ideology of a certain class is the historical role played by that class in satisfying the vital needs of society at a given stage of its development.

In the period of the rise of the bourgeoisie the objective course of economic development was adequately reflected in its ideology —in philosophy, political economy, law, and so on. At the same time this ideology contained illusions, in particular the notion that the historically transient bourgeois system was eternal and in accord with "the natural rights" of man, his nature and reason.

Only the socialist ideology could shake off all illusions and establish itself as genuinely scientific. This happened because all former classes that had historically achieved leadership of society sought to perpetuate their rule. The historic mission of the proletariat, on the other hand, is to abolish all division of society into classes and for this reason the creators of the proletarian ideology were able to produce social science—the science of the laws of social development.

Ideology also influences the development of natural science. The data of the natural sciences are always theoretically generalised and interpreted from the positions of a certain world outlook. It is absurd to talk of bourgeois and proletarian mathematics, physics, chemistry and so on, just as it is absurd to take a class position or class approach to questions that are neutral in regard to the interests of classes. But the development of the natural sciences shows that they are not neutral towards philosophy, that they are the scene of a struggle between world outlooks, that the achievements of natural science quite often serve as the point of departure for diametrically opposed epistemological conclusions by the ideologists of hostile classes.

To sum up, we may give the following definition of ideology: *ideology is a system of views and ideas directly or indirectly reflecting the economic and social peculiarities of society, expressing the position, interests and aims of a definite social class and designed to preserve or change the existing social structure.*

Now let us consider the question of the interrelation between social psychology and ideology.

In the final analysis, social consciousness—both social psychology and ideology—is determined by the economic and social relations that in every given society manifest themselves primarily as

the interests of certain social classes. But what are interests?

Interest is not only a certain psychological response, expressed in a person's urge to acquire or assimilate certain material or spiritual goods. Interest, to a certain extent, exists objectively, in that it is connected with the existence of man, his conditions of life, his needs, which form the basis of his attitude to values and his responses. Any society as a whole, any class or nation has its objective interests, although people may not always be conscious of them. When the working class first appeared on the historical scene it was still a "class in itself" and did not understand its class interests. It ceased to be a "class in itself" and became a "class for itself" when it acquired its own ideology, which gave it a scientific understanding of the conditions, course and general results of the proletarian movement, and helped it to become aware of the interests of this movement taken as a whole.

Ideology is, as a rule, introduced into the consciousness of a class by its theoreticians, its political party, which is its conscious vanguard. It does not grow out of social psychology and cannot be regarded, as some have assumed, as a "concentration of psychology", although it is connected with social psychology and undoubtedly experiences its influence.

The psychology of a class and its ideology have common social roots. Hence the objective possibility of acquainting the masses with the ideology of their class. But in class-divided society this possibility is realised in the conditions of the ideological struggle.

The social position of the proletariat undoubtedly conditions its revolutionary consciousness, its urge to bring about the socialist reorganisation of society. Large-scale production with its highly developed social connection between the producers promotes the formation of a collectivist psychology in the working class. At the same time certain sections of the proletariat in the capitalist countries are infected with views that contradict the objective needs and aims of their class.

By its nature personal interest need not necessarily depart from the common interest of the class or social group, just as national interest, which exists as long as nations exist, need not necessarily stand in opposition to the interests of another nation. All these oppositions and conflicts are in the final analysis brought about by the existence of private property. The bourgeoisie plays on personal interest, on a person's attachment to his nation, and seeks to divert the attention of the masses from the struggle against capital to the struggle between individuals and groups and also to the struggle between nations and races.

Hence the importance of the socialist ideology for the working-

class movement. This ideology develops the consciousness of the revolutionary class, keeps it from being corrupted by individualism and nationalism and introduces ideas of collectivism and socialist internationalism. The consciousness and experience of the advanced section of a given class greatly influence its ideology, its development and enrichment.

3. Forms of Social Consciousness. Their Social Function and Specific Features

In class society the social consciousness assumes various forms: social, political and legal theories and beliefs, science, philosophy, morals, art and religion. Each of these forms has its own particular object and mode of reflection, influences people's social existence and consciousness in its own particular way, and is characterised by its specific role in the ideological and political struggle between classes.

At the early stages of development of society, social consciousness was not broken down into separate forms. The harsh existence of primitive man with its extremely low level of material production had its correspondingly primitive and undifferentiated consciousness. Mental work had not yet been separated from manual labour, and people's consciousness was "directly interwoven with the material activity and the material intercourse of men—the language of real life".[1] But the rudiments of such forms of social consciousness as art, morality and religion are to be found at certain stages of the development of labour activity even in pre-class society.

With further division of labour, the appearance of private property, classes and the state, social life became much more complex, and so did social consciousness. The division of labour into physical and intellectual, and the monopolisation of the latter by the ruling class signified an increasing separation of social consciousness from men's material practice. Consciousness became relatively independent of social existence. It could now be regarded as completely independent of existence and even primary in relation to existence, it could "proceed to the formation of 'pure' theory, theology, philosophy, morality, etc."[2] In reality all these "pure" forms of consciousness in some way or other expressed the real conditions or relationships of class society and acted as the ideological reflection of the interests of certain classes.

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology*, Vol. 5, p. 36.
[2] Ibid., p. 46.

We shall now briefly examine the separate forms of social consciousness, their specific features and functions, in connection with the historical conditions and social needs that brought them into existence.

(a) *Political and Legal Consciousness.*

The questions of political and legal consciousness were broadly dealt with in the previous chapters, when we considered classes, the political organisation of society, and revolution. Here we shall deal only with the specific nature of these two forms of consciousness from the standpoint of how they reflect the economic structure.

Political ideology is the systematised, theoretical expression of the views of a definite class concerning the political organisation of society, the forms of state, the relations between various classes and social groups, their role in the life of society, relations with other states and nations, and so on. It is a vital weapon in the struggle for political power, in the defence, substantiation and reinforcement of a definite political order and its economic foundation. Closely connected with political ideology is *legal ideology, which is the systematised theoretical expression of the legal consciousness of a class,* i.e., its views on the nature and purpose of legal relationships, norms, and institutions, on questions of legislation, the courts, the Procurator's Office, and so on. Its purpose is to defend or establish the legal order corresponding to the interests of that class.

Like any form of theoretical consciousness, political and legal ideologies express their propositions in logical form and rely on the previous development of the given branch of knowledge. They are expressed in specialised works on the theory of state and law. But in dealing with the political consciousness we are concerned not only with political doctrines and theories, but also with political programmes and platforms, with political strategy and tactics. Their essential character is most clearly demonstrated by the example of the activity of the Marxist-Leninist parties. Their programmes, based on the theory of Marxism-Leninism, show the ultimate aim of the working-class movement. Their strategy also sets definite goals for the movement over longer or shorter periods, is guided by the programmes and takes into consideration the correlation of the contesting forces. Their tactics help to work out a definite line of conduct for any specific situation. The aims that are set by classes in their political programmes and platforms, in their strategy and tactics, express the interests and aspirations of these classes, their will, as dictated by the material conditions of their life.

At the present time communist political and legal ideas exert an ever increasing progressive influence on social life. They mould the

consciousness and will of the masses in accordance with the fundamental needs of social development and are essential for building the new society and internationally uniting the working class in its struggle against imperialism. Marxism-Leninism has not only laid the scientific foundation for an understanding of the class essence of the various ideological conceptions—political, legal and so on—it has also placed the political and legal ideologies of the working class, its entire political activity on a scientific basis.

(b) *Morality.*

Morality plays a special role in moulding consciousness and will and regulating human behaviour.

The rudiments of morality appeared even in primitive society. Having freed the individual from his tribal fetters and brought him into a more complex set of social relationships, class society stimulated the development of individual self-consciousness and confronted the individual with a multitude of new problems. These problems concerned the attitude to be taken towards the new social community, towards the people of a certain class, towards the state, etc. They had a significance that went far beyond the previous customs and traditions of the clan or tribe. In other words, new norms of behaviour were required and various beliefs came into being concerning these new norms as well as the old customs and traditions.

As the moral life of society became more complex, specific moral codes (collections of fundamental norms, rules and commandments) and doctrines came into being; for a long period they were mainly of a religious nature. With the development of philosophy morality became a branch of philosophical knowledge, forming the subject of *ethics.*

The developed moral consciousness—the individual's awareness of his connection with other people in his everyday life—is part of the individual's general world outlook and, in some way or another, is connected with the solution of the questions of the essence of man, his position and role in the surrounding world, his ideas concerning the meaning of his life, of good and evil, the moral ideal and moral values. The choice of a course of action and its evaluation involve meditations and psychological experiences concerning the moral character of these actions. A person educated in the spirit of a certain morality is himself conscious of his moral duty (i.e., his personal obligations in relation to other people and a certain community), can himself judge his actions, and morally condemns himself for choosing the wrong course, for shirking his obligations, his duty. Man's moral self-consciousness, his awareness of personal responsibility for his behaviour, for his course of action, his evaluation of

his own behaviour are expressed in conscience.

The specific feature of morality as a way of regulating human conduct is that it does not rely directly on any special institutions designed to enforce moral standards (as distinct from the law, which is backed by the state with its power to enforce the law). Morality is supported by the force of persuasion, example, public opinion, education, traditions, by the moral authority of individuals, organisations or institutions. Moral standards are therefore not as detailed and strictly regulated as judicial or organisational norms. At the same time they extend to relationships between people that are not regulated by any state agencies or social organisations (friendship, comradeship, love, etc.).

By influencing the individual, his psychology and consciousness it performs its function as a regulator of behaviour and helps to create corresponding moral relations between people at work, in everyday life and social intercourse. Moral standards and judgements extend to the behaviour of classes, peoples, states, etc. The moral consciousness is for millions of people a powerful stimulus to action. For this reason a revolutionary party is bound to be concerned about its formation. The revolutionary criticism of the declining system includes its moral as well as political exposure. Its purpose is to awaken the anger of the masses against the system, inspire them with faith in their strength, and in the victory of the new system.

From what has been said we may define morality as a *system of views and ideas, standards and judgements concerning the regulation of individual behaviour, the coordination of the actions of individuals with the interests of other people or a certain community, of ways of educating people, of creating and reinforcing certain moral qualities and relationships.* In performing these functions morality transforms its standards and judgements into people's inner motives, their moral feelings and qualities, into awareness of personal obligations and personal responsibilities.

The ethical systems elaborated by the ideologists of certain classes, like their morality, bear the stamp of their time, of the specific features of those classes. Ethics in the past was primarily concerned with the grounds for moral (virtuous) behaviour. Pre-Marxist ethics inferred the demands of moral behaviour from allegedly eternal "human nature", which it regarded as either altruistic or egoistical. Accordingly, precedence was given either to the individual's *interest* (happiness, pleasure, delight), usually idealised, or the *general interest*, which also took the idealised form of a universal moral law to which man had to subordinate his personal aspirations and desires. Pre-Marxist ethics sought, but could not find, ways of combin-

ing personal and social interest, happiness and duty, selfishness and self-sacrifice.

In the bourgeois countries of Europe at the end of the last century Engels observed three types of morality: feudal-Christian, bourgeois, and proletarian. The first had been inherited by bourgeois society from the Middle Ages, the second was the predominant morality of the existing capitalist society, and the third expressed the interests of the future. What is the connection between the first two systems of morality? The main connection is that they are both founded on private property as the pillar of society. Hence the inevitability of the first becoming adapted to the second. As the American sociologist Jerome Davis put it, "the result of the interlocking control of religion by capitalistic interests has been that ethical standards of the Christian community have largely conformed to the ethical standards of capitalism".[1]

The question is often asked whether there exist in class society the moral standards that are essential for any human community. Yes, such standards do exist. There are certain *simple standards of human morality* that take shape in the process of the entire historical development of the peoples. They are to protect the community from any excesses that may threaten it (physical violence, abuses); they demand elementary honesty in everyday intercourse, and so on.

While man continues to be exploited by man, while imperialism with its policy of oppression and robbery of the peoples continues to exist, these simple standards of morality and justice are inevitably violated. The bourgeoisie pays lip service to them but ignores them in the event. Only socialism and communism make the general human standards of morality inviolable rules of life in the relations both between individuals and between nations.

One of the most important results of the development of Soviet society since the October Revolution of 1917 is the formation of a new type of person, a builder of the new society, a Soviet patriot and internationalist, who combines ideological conviction with vital energy, culture, knowledge and the ability to apply them. This person lives in a truly free society, in the morally healthy atmosphere of collectivism and comradeship, friendship between peoples and nations, and socialist humanism that characterise the way of life of the builders of communism—*the Soviet way of life.*

Communist morality expresses the humanist mission of the working class and progressive forces of contemporary society to establish

[1] Jerome Davis, *Capitalism and Its Culture,* Farrar and Rinehart, New York, 1935, p. 400.

in the world genuinely human relations between people. It embodies the finest achievements of human moral progress and is the highest stage yet attained in this field. Its most general principles unite the working people in the struggle for the new society. In striving for this new society the working class fights at the same time for the new man, for the new morals. His morality has a class character but its aim is to liberate all mankind from all forms of oppression and slavery. When this aim is achieved, morality will lose its class character. In the words of Engels, "morality which stands above class antagonisms and above any recollection of them becomes possible only at a stage of society which has not only overcome class antagonisms but has even forgotten them in practical life".[1]

(c) *Art.*

Art, like science, is acquiring ever greater significance in the spiritual life of contemporary society.

Art is one of the most ancient forms of social consciousness; it dates back to pre-class society. The study of primitive cultures shows that beginning from the paleolithic period people gradually learned not only how to make and improve the tools they needed but also how to create works of art. Labour perfected man's creative abilities, developed his thinking, exercised his hands, differentiated his feelings and developed the desire for fine work, for rhythm and symmetry; it fashioned the ability to generalise and to reproduce objects and phenomena in the form of imagery. The result of thousands of years of toil was that art became possible as a form of aesthetic perception of the world, as activity creating objects designed not for tilling the soil or hunting animals but for embodying the creative imagination of man, his ideas and feelings. The need that art satisfied was the need for beauty, for creating things that would delight people. This need itself developed with the development of artistic activity as one of the forms of people's creative activity. The latter demanded specific aesthetic abilities, cultivated aesthetic feelings, tastes, evaluations, experiences and ideas, which are a specific form of human reflection of the world.

In class society art became an independent field of activity, isolated from material production. "The exclusive concentration of artistic talent in particular individuals, and its suppression in the broad mass which is bound up with this, is a consequence of division of labour."[2]

Art became largely the occupation of an élite—poets, artists,

[1] F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p. 118.
[2] K. Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology*, Vol. 5, p. 394.

sculptors, musicians, etc. It was subjected to specialised theoretical analyses. A new philosophical science appeared—aesthetics, the study of man's perception of beauty, its essence and laws. Art began to be studied in its various branches. Outside the professional sphere art developed in the form of folk art (mythology, folklore, etc.), which had deep roots in pre-class society and in the course of the centuries had produced unfading artistic values.

One of the fundamental questions of aesthetics and the study of art is the question of the relationship of the aesthetic consciousness (notions of the beautiful, the ugly, etc.) and art to reality. This question has received various answers from philosophers, art theoreticians and artists themselves. The materialist theories in aesthetics maintain that reality is the determining factor in the formation of the aesthetic consciousness. The idealists, on the contrary, assume that aesthetic consciousness and art are independent of social relations.

However, the historical development of aesthetic notions testifies to the fact that they differ considerably among people of different classes and different epochs. In reply to the assertion of the "indisputability" (i.e., suitability for all epochs) of the ancient ideal of beauty embodied in the Venus de Milo, Plekhanov remarked that the primitive artists, judging by many of their drawings that have survived, would have been quite unable to find any beauty in this image, and that medieval art was very far from recognising this ideal.

But even in the drawings of primitive man we find something that gives us aesthetic pleasure. Concerning ancient art (particularly that of Greece) Marx wrote that its works "still give us aesthetic pleasure and are in certain respects regarded as a standard and unattainable ideal".[1] He linked this with the notion of Greek art as the wonderful childhood of mankind, which would always fascinate and delight us as a stage in our own development never to be repeated. It possessed features that were of universal human significance.

On the other hand, capitalist production, though at a far higher technical level than that of the ancients, is, as Marx said, "hostile to certain branches of spiritual production, for example, art and poetry".[2]

The works of the great West European writers of the 19th century Stendhal, Balzac, Hugo, Dickens and others, could grow in the soil of capitalist society only as a direct or indirect expression

[1] K. Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, London, 1971, p. 217.

[2] K. Marx, *Theories of Surplus-Value*, Part I, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1975, p. 285.

of protest against the conditions of that society (the power of money, the jungle morality concealed by illusions of freedom, equality, etc.), which disfigure man and rob him of his individuality.

The dependence of art and aesthetic views on social conditions is thus highly complex. There are many intermediate links between the situation and the interests of a given class and their artistic reflection.[1] The social and political struggle and its reflection in various forms of consciousness and also the psychology of certain sections of society play a tremendous role in this respect. The artistic representation of reality is also greatly influenced by the individuality of the artist himself, his talent and skill, his world outlook and the school of art to which he belongs, his links with certain traditions, etc.

It may be taken as a general law of the development of art that the most significant works of art, which form part of the golden treasury of human culture, have been artistic embodiments of living truth, of the progressive ideals and aspirations of the people of a certain epoch. The national form of art helps artists to express the advanced ideas of their time, as long as the artist, while remaining a son of his own people, does not scorn the achievements of other peoples. If we fail to consider the effects that cultures have on one another there will be much that we shall be unable to comprehend in the culture of both past and present. Progressive art serves simultaneously the interests of its own people and of mankind, its own time and the future.

Art that is bound up with the life of the people is a powerful factor in social progress. It performs its function through artistic perception of the world, through the satisfaction of man's aesthetic needs. It reflects reality in artistic images and through them influences people's thoughts and feelings, their aspirations, actions and behaviour. The best works of art are passed on from one generation to another and serve both as a means of knowing social life and as a means of the ideological, aesthetic and moral education of new generations.

In aesthetic thought there have existed and continue to exist theories that reject the social role of art and regard art as an end in itself. Such theories usually express the artist's dissatisfaction with

[1] To this we must add that in various forms of art the connection with social life is not always the same. Music is connected with society and classes by far more complex relations than, for example, literature or painting. But in all its forms art cannot be profoundly understood without a scientific analysis of the whole structure of social relations in their interaction (see F. Engels to J. Bloch in Königsberg, Sept. 21-22, 1890, in: K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, pp. 417-19).

his social environment and lead him, under certain conditions, to reject any social protest and become involved in a one-sided enthusiasm for formalistic experimentation and the like.

The subject of artistic expression is for the most part the life of society, of man and the sphere of human relations. Art also portrays nature. But even such portrayal always implies human feelings, emotions, moods, and so on. The artist does not photograph nature, he perceives it aesthetically. He discovers in nature that which is beautiful, splendid or ugly on the basis not only of the actual qualities of objects but through his own perceptions, by applying his own "yardstick". When a person calls this or that object of nature magnificent (for example, high mountains) he is expressing both the objective nature of the object and the impression it produces. "The task of art," Balzac wrote, "lies not in copying nature but in expressing it... No artist, poet or sculptor should separate the impression from the cause for they are both inseparably part of each other."[1] He did not mean just a casual, subjective impression but grasping "the spirit, soul and face of things and beings".[2]

This demand is all the more applicable to the portrayal of people, their inner world and social intercourse. The portrayal of the ugly and beautiful, the tragic and the comic, the heroic and the trivial in the life of society and man presupposes a profound knowledge of social reality, its development and meaning. The aesthetic "yardstick" that the artist uses to measure reality is not simply a manifestation of his subjective will. It is moulded in the process of the whole social-historical practice of mankind.

Thus the cognitive (and also the political, moral, educational, etc.) significance of art must be considered in connection with its ideological and aesthetic function. When the artist reproduces reality in the form of images he makes an ideological and aesthetic evaluation of reality, that is, he expresses his attitude to it in accordance with his aesthetic ideal, his notions of the beautiful. This shows how important it is that these notions should correspond to the objective qualities of reality and be based on a true understanding of the paths of its development and transformation. The artist is "tendentious" even in his selection of material for a work of art, not to mention the fact that he pronounces his judgement upon phenomena of social life, advocates one thing and condemns another, awakens certain feelings and aspirations.

[1] *Oeuvres complètes de Honore de Balzac, La Comedie humaine*, Société d'éditions littéraires et artistiques, Paris, 1910, Vol. 28, p. 9.
[2] Ibid.

From what has been said we may define art as a *specific aesthetic form of social consciousness and perception of reality, its artistic cognition and evaluation, as a special form of man's creative activity.*

In Lenin's view art should be a faithful reflection of its time, a source of joy and inspiration to the millions; it should unite their feelings, thoughts and will, enrich them spiritually and bring out the artist in them. As socialist society advances, the role of literature and art in the formation of people's world outlook, their ethical and aesthetic education and the development of their best traits proportionately increases.

Art that is linked with the interests of the people and socialism seeks to fulfil such a mission. Though it is far from imposing on the artist any strict demands that would limit the range of his thought or imagination, it sees its task in serving the millions of people who are fighting for a better future. Herein lies the *partisanship of art* and its true freedom. Such art cannot be adapted either to the tastes of a handful of snobs or to primitive tastes. The workers and peasants, said Lenin, have gained the right to a real and great art.

(d) *Religion*

Marx and Engels regarded religion and philosophy—the forms of social consciousness that express people's view of the world—as the forms farthest removed from the economic basis.

Religion is of more ancient origin than philosophy. Its emergence in pre-class society was conditioned by the low development of production and production relations.

The early forms of religion are connected with the deification of natural forces, plants and animals. Vestiges of these forms (animism, totemism) survive even in later religions. Thus the Greek god Zeus, although endowed with human features, could turn into a bull, an eagle or a swan. The Egyptian god Anubis had a human body and the head of a dog. From the deification and worship of the phenomena of nature people go on to deify social forces and this accordingly produces a change in the functions of the gods. In ancient Greek mythology Mars was at first the god of vegetation, and afterwards became the god of war, while Hephaestos was at first the god of fire and later became the god of metal-working.

The history of religion also shows that among no people did religion ever begin with monotheism, with the doctrine of one god, as certain theologists have maintained; on the contrary, monotheism was preceded by polytheism, involving the worship of several gods.

In wars between peoples the gods of the conquered yielded place to the gods of the conquerors, who often assumed some of the fea

tures of the gods of the vanquished people; the uniting of tribes and nationalities brought about combinations or even the merging of gods. When large monarchical states were formed, the multiplicity of religious faiths that had been characteristic of tribal unions and the early type of state (where one supreme deity usually emerged from a number of deities) was replaced by the worship of one, almighty god which assumed the attributes of all the other gods.

Just as the helplessness of primitive man in the struggle against nature engenders faith in supernatural beings so does the helplessness of the people of class-divided society in the face of the blind forces of social development engender a similar faith. In capitalist society "the socially downtrodden condition of the working masses and their apparently complete helplessness in the face of the blind forces of capitalism,"[1] are, according to Lenin, the deepest root of religion. Man is a wretched creature in the face of these mighty forces, a slave of god, craving favours of the Almighty.

In addition to faith in the supernatural and fantastic notions of the world and man, a major role in all religions is played by *religious worship,* by certain rituals, which have their origin in primitive magic. Primitive man tried to make natural forces fulfil his desires and intentions by the performance of magical ceremonies (invocations, sacrifices, etc.). Religious people today seek consolation and help from God through rituals and obedience to certain prohibitions laid down by the modern religions.

Sorcerers, witch-doctors, etc., were the intermediaries between people and occult forces in primitive society. Class society brings into being a special professional group of servants of religion—priests. The church acquires great power over men's minds. Its ideological influence is reinforced by its connection with the state and by the establishment of one particular faith as the state religion. Religious worship is further developed and the ceremonial of religious services involving music and song plays an important part in fostering religious feelings and strengthening the faith.

The three elements of religion—(1) religious notions, (2) religious feelings and (3) worship and ritual—vary in importance depending on the social conditions. Religion is the most conservative ideological form in that it rests on the "eternal and immutable" dogmas of religious faith.

At the same time history shows us that under the influence of great social upheavals some religions are supplanted by others. The

[1] V. I. Lenin, *The Attitude of the Workers' Party to Religion,* Vol. 15, pp. 405-06. In another place, Lenin writes: "...The yoke of religion that weighs upon mankind is merely a product and reflection of the economic yoke within society" (*Socialism and Religion,* Vol. 10, p. 86).

ancient religions were conquered by Christianity in the period of the decline of slave society. Moreover, Christianity inherited certain features from the old religions, for example, recognition of the Old Testament of Judaism, and the myths of the oriental peoples, concerning the suffering, death and resurrection of the gods, all this being rolled into one with vulgarised versions of Greek philosophy, particularly that of the Stoics.

Having emerged in the Roman Empire as the religion of the poor and oppressed masses, Christianity subsequently became the official ideology of the ruling classes and lost certain essential features of early Christianity: its democratic spirit, its disapproval of rites and ceremony, etc. With the development of feudalism "Christianity grew into the religious counterpart to it (feudalism) with a corresponding feudal hierarchy".[1] In the 16th century, on the basis of the growth and consolidation of the bourgeoisie, Protestantism with its idea of direct communion between God and man, its appeal to the individual, broke away from the feudal-Christian Catholic Church. The development of capitalism compelled Catholicism, while preserving its dogma, to adapt itself to the new conditions and evolve its own social doctrine designed to reconcile labour and capital, justify colonialism, and so on.

Today all branches of Christianity, and other religions, are undergoing a process of adaptation to the new conditions connected with the development of science and technology and the profound revolutionary processes in the life of society.

At certain periods of history revolutionary movements of the oppressed have given a religious form to their demands, as was the case in the Middle Ages, for example.

In the contemporary world, too, one observes a certain activisation of social movements under religious banners, an intensification of the activity of religious organisations in both West and East. Various movements under the banner of Islam have assumed a mass character and the Moslem clergy is particularly active politically.

What is the social role of religion today? Is it progressive or reactionary? There is no unambiguous answer to this question. It has to be considered in specific cases because religion is used by various classes and social strata for their political aims. The exploiters use religion as a means of diverting the working people's spiritual energies and strengthening their own rule. The masses may use religion as an ideological weapon against reaction. It is wrong there-

[1] F. Engels, "Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy", in: K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 373.

fore to label the supporters of every religiously inspired movement political reactionaries. Today the fight against reaction and for social progress is being taken up by masses of believers—workers, clergy, and others. In other words, progressive actions often assume a religious form, and this is particularly characteristic of the developing countries. Leftwing tendencies are especially apparent among the clergy and religious organisations of Latin America.

In the West, religious organisations, the clergy and believers in general are becoming more and more active in the anti-war movement.

But the positive social content that in certain historical periods took the form of religious consciousness does not negate the basic proposition that religious consciousness is a perverted consciousness, and for this reason religion can never be an adequate form of expression of the essential interests of the masses and the meaning of human life.

Marxism took up the banner of militant atheism from the old materialists and developed their criticism of religion on the basis of the latest discoveries of natural and social science. It revealed the social roots of religion in class society and showed that the struggle to free the masses from the spiritual captivity of religion is not merely a matter of atheistic education, as was assumed by the early materialists. It should be, above all, a struggle against the conditions that engender or maintain the religious consciousness. Only on this basis can there be really fruitful atheistic enlightenment, which is an inseparable part of the work of building a scientific world outlook.

Communist society will forever liberate people from the religious view of the world. The experience of building the new society shows, however, that even after the social roots of the religious world view have been undermined and the church has lost its former political and ideological role, religion continues to influence the backward sections of the population. Hence it is the duty of the conscious builders of the new society to carry on systematic atheistic work, relying on social experience, science, and on the scientific philosophical world outlook. But the party warns that the feelings of religious people should never be insulted and that administrative measures, measures of coercion, should not be applied in any campaign against religious prejudices. In relation to the socialist state, religion is private affair and the constitutions of the socialist countries guarantee citizens freedom of conscience. In the socialist countries religious people are as a rule active participants in the building of a new society.

In the struggle against the forces of imperialism and reaction, the struggle for peace, democracy and socialism, the Communists strive to unite all working people regardless of differences in their world outlooks.

4. The Relative Independence of Social Consciousness. Connection and Mutual Influence of Its Forms

Social consciousness is determined by social existence and yet it possesses a certain relative independence. When radical changes occur in the economic structure, this does not mean that corresponding changes in social consciousness follow automatically.

There is a *continuity of development* and also interaction between the various forms of consciousness, both in social psychology and ideology.

First we must note the tremendous part played by tradition and habit in people's consciousness, particularly in ordinary consciousness. A distinction should be made, however, between the habits and traditions that hinder the development of the new forms of life and new consciousness, and those that should be preserved and further encouraged. The assimilation of progressive traditions and habits (revolutionary and labour traditions, habits of observing certain rules of community life, etc.) is of great importance for social progress.

The process of reform of the social consciousness does not always occur with the same ease and rapidity among different social groups, or even among the individuals of one particular group. Even in socialist society we encounter negative attitudes in the consciousness of certain individuals or even sections of society. "The force of habit in millions and tens of millions is a most formidable force,"[1] wrote Lenin, referring to the stultified consciousness evolved by centuries of private ownership. Habits of this kind, hangovers from the past in people's consciousness, continue to exist even when the economic foundations of their existence have disappeared. Such, for example, are greed, graft, drunkenness, idleness, profiteering, red tape, etc. The Communist Party and all progressive, politically conscious citizens are waging and must continue to wage a ruthless struggle against such negative factors.

The relative independence of consciousness in the development of ideology has certain characteristic features. The fact that ideology is a systematised assembly of ideas is reflected in its history.

[1] V. I. Lenin, *"Left-Wing" Communism—an Infantile Disorder*, Vol. 31, p. 44.

Although its development is ultimately determined by economic development, every form of ideology and every form of social consciousness has its own continuity. For example, political ideology depends on the basis to a greater degree than philosophy. The latter reflects the basis less directly and therefore has relatively greater independence of development.

Advanced ideology poses the most pressing questions of social development and in this sense anticipates its objective course, but this should not be interpreted as meaning that consciousness ceases to be determined by existence. The point is that consciousness reveals certain tendencies of development of social existence and more or less accurately reflects them. Being able to foresee the processes and tendencies of development makes it possible to use the transforming power of progressive social ideas and testifies to their active role in social development.

The relative independence of social consciousness is also expressed *in the interconnection and reciprocal influence of its forms.* This means that in the history of one or another ideological form, which is ultimately determined by economic development, certain problems arise and are solved in connection with the development of other ideological forms as well.

Certain forms of consciousness that provide the fullest concentration of the consciousness of a given society (primarily the leading class) come to the fore in every historical epoch. We know that in the Greece of the 5th century B. C. philosophy and art (theatre, sculpture, architecture) played a particularly important part in social consciousness. In the Europe of the Middle Ages religion exerted the predominant influence on philosophy, morals, art, and the political and legal outlook. Medieval philosophy was the bondmaid of theology. Even materialist and atheistic thought could in those days appear only in theological guise. In the conditions of capitalist society religion has relatively less influence on people's hearts and minds, and there is a considerable growth in the role of secular ideology—philosophical, political and legal beliefs and theories—to which religion has to adapt itself.

At certain periods the various forms of social consciousness (religion, philosophy, art) have served as most important instruments for the propaganda of political ideas, as a means of political struggle.

In France in the second half of the 18th century, in Germany at the turn of the 19th, and in Russia from 1840 to 1870, philosophy and literature became the main arena of political struggle for the progressive social forces that strove to solve the vital problems of social development, including those of man's own development, his

liberation from the fetters of medieval, feudal relationships. This role of philosophy and literature in the political struggle sprang not only from the specific conditions of the economic and political development of these countries, but also from the profound, organic link between progressive philosophy, progressive art and the life of the people, their longing for freedom.

The connection between philosophy and art is not confined to their interaction, direct or indirect. Great works of art always contain profound philosophical meditations on the world and man (Greek tragedy, Shakespeare, Goethe, Pushkin, Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky). History furnishes many examples of works in which philosophical thought and artistic creativity are combined, in which the philosopher emerges as a novelist or poet. Such are the philosophical tales of Voltaire, some of the works of Diderot *(Le Neveu de Rameau)*, and Chernyshevsky's *What Is to Be Done?*

We have already spoken of the relationship between philosophy and religion. It may be added that idealist philosophy quite often not only aligned itself with religion (in the fight against materialism) but also evolved directly into a religious philosophy and merged with religion (Kierkegaard, some of the existentialists and personalists). In certain cases substantial elements of a philosophical system have contributed to the foundation of a new religious doctrine.

The interaction between religion and art, between religion and morality has compelled attention from time immemorial. To this day we hear assertions (mainly from theologists) that religion was the source of both art and morality. Studies of the history of primitive culture, however, show that the origin and development of art and morality (and religion itself) are connected with certain social conditions and needs of which we have already spoken. For many centuries religion played the part of mankind's official moral mentor, but this does not imply that morality arose on the basis of religion, or that it cannot exist without religion. The aesthetic value of many paintings and sculptures on religious themes is not a derivative of these themes. They were created by outstanding artists and, like the Parthenon and the Gothic cathedrals, remain works of art that give us aesthetic pleasure irrespective of religious feelings.

All forms of social consciousness and also the various spheres of natural science, contribute to the formation of people's world outlook. The fundamental questions of world outlook throughout the history of class society have been answered in various ways by religion and philosophy from definite social positions. Political and legal ideologies exert a considerable influence on people's world

outlook (under certain conditions this influence is even more considerable than that of religion and philosophy). Unlike the types of world outlook that dominated society with antagonistic classes in various periods, Marxism-Leninism is a fully integrated scientific world outlook, hostile to superstition, prejudice, reaction and oppression. Socialist society, having abolished exploitation of man by man, has eliminated the gap between world outlook and growth of scientific knowledge, and between the growth of scientific knowledge and the predominant morality, a gap that was characteristic of class-divided society. The Communist Party believes the forming of communist world outlook, the education of the masses in the ideas of Marxism-Leninism, to be crucial to the whole ideological and educational task. Its aim is that these ideas should take possession of the masses and inspire them to play an active creative part in building the new society, in developing the new relations between people and in establishing communist morality.

5. Social and Individual Consciousness

The general conditions of the social environment in which certain people live determine the unity of their views and aspirations, which is based on the unity of their interests. And even a consensus of opinion will always find individual expression among individuals. Sharing a certain social origin and status with others offers the individual only the possibility of a corresponding social orientation. It is by no means an absolute guarantee of such an orientation.

The point is that individual consciousness has a "biography" that differs from the "biography" of the social consciousness.

The *social consciousness* is governed by social laws.

Its history necessarily follows the history of social existence and any changes (evolutionary or revolutionary) that occur in the social consciousness are ultimately determined by corresponding changes in social existence.

The *individual consciousness* is born and dies with the individual himself. It expresses the unique features of his path in life, the peculiarities of his upbringing, and various political and ideological influences.

For the individual consciousness the objective environment which influences its formation is the result of the interaction of the macro-environment—social existence (in class society the conditions of life of a class), and the micro-environment—the conditions of life of a certain section within a class, a social group and

also the immediate environment (family, friends, acquaintances) and, finally, the conditions of personal life. The individual consciousness is also influenced by such factors as the level of the individual's development, his personal character, etc. All other conditions being equal, the specific paths of the individual's development determine the difference between his spiritual world and that of other individuals and create a wealth of human individualities.

The social consciousness and the individual consciousness are constantly interacting and enriching each other. Every individual throughout his life, through relationships with other people, through education and training, experiences the influence of the social consciousness, although his attitude towards this influence is not passive but active and selective.

The norms of consciousness evolved historically by society nourish the individual spiritually, influence his beliefs and become the source of his moral precepts, his aesthetic notions and feelings.

Social consciousness does not merely enter individual minds; it is a collective mind, a unique and complex synthesis of individual minds. According to Engels, human thought "exists only as the individual thought of many milliards of past, present and future men.... The total thought of all these human beings".[1] Certain beliefs or ideas emanating from an individual may become, and do become, the possession of society, acquire the significance of a social force, when they reach beyond the bounds of personal existence and become part of the general consciousness, forming the beliefs and standards of behaviour of other people. Hence the need for society to show concern for the development of the individual, his gifts and creative abilities.

The character of the social system has a decisive influence on the individual's assimilation of the achievements of social thought and on his own social "response". Where the ruling class has a monopoly of education, the broad masses are, in effect, deprived of the ability to broaden their mental horizons and to develop their inherent talents to the full. Only in socialist society do the masses of the working people acquire the opportunity of showing their creative initiative in all spheres of activity, and thus enriching the common fund of knowledge and experience of society.

In contemporary capitalist society the ruling class, as we shall see later, uses all available media for conditioning the mass consciousness and public opinion, but the development of the democratic and socialist forces of society increases their role in

[1] F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p. 108.

forming public opinion, designed to combat the omnipotence of the monopolies, militarism and war, racial persecution, etc. Public opinion in class society thus inevitably reflects the struggle for class interests and ideologies.

The characteristic feature of Soviet society is the people's moral and political unity. This is not to say, of course, that under socialism there is no conflict of opinions on various questions. By drawing the working people into the administration of the state and developing socialist democracy socialism offers every citizen the opportunity of expressing his opinion on any question of social life.

Thus, not every conflict of opinions is ideological conflict. The ideological struggle between the two social systems, however, does occupy a highly important place in the life of society, particularly in the present age.

6. The Struggle of Ideas in the Present Epoch

The history of society testifies to the tremendous role played by ideas in its development.

This role has varied in importance in various periods. It depends (1) on the character of social relations, on the basis of which certain ideas arise, (2) on the historical role of the class that produces these ideas, (3) on the degree of their correctness, the accuracy of their reflection of the urgent needs of social development, and (4) on the spreading of these ideas among the masses, on their influence over the masses, which is not always equivalent to their correctness. The role of progressive social ideas in conditions of imminent and actual deep-going social change may be significant even when these ideas express the needs of social development not in scientific form, but, for example, in the form of an abstract demand for justice that has become a part of the mass consciousness. Concerning ideas of this kind, Engels wrote that, though fallacious in the formal economic sense, they contain truth from the standpoint of world history.

Ideas influence the development of society not by themselves but through the activity of men. "*Ideas* can never lead beyond an old world system.... Ideas *cannot carry anything out* at all. In order to carry out ideas men are needed who dispose of a certain practical force."[1]

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *The Holy Family, or Critique of Critical Criticism*, Vol. 4, p. 119.

The history of society since its division into antagonistic classes is also the history of the struggle of ideas—progressive and reactionary, acute at turning points, when the foundations of the old society are crumbling and the new social forces, the progressive classes, are emerging on the historical scene.

The current aim of the bourgeoisie and its ideologists is to combat the revolutionary movement of the working class and all working people. In this struggle the bourgeoisie does everything it can to embellish capitalism and present capital's domination of the mass of the working people as a "free society", a "society based on the rule of law", an "affluent society", and so on, all of which does not prevent the imperialists in certain circumstances (as in Chile, for example, when the broad masses try to achieve genuine freedom) from putting reactionary military juntas in power and introducing regimes that terrorise the masses and play havoc with the working people's most elementary rights.

Bourgeois ideologists devote their main effort to instilling a belief in the unshakeability of the foundations of the society based on private ownership of the means of production, as a society whose improvement (in the spirit of regulation by the state and the monopolies) offers a reliable source of social progress and prosperity.

Carefully differentiated methods of influencing people, appealing often not so much to reason as to the emotions, are devised. Use is made of the huge apparatus for the ideological brainwashing of the masses known as the mass media (press, radio, television, cinema), and their mass effect is to produce a certain social consciousness, a general orientation towards standard models of behaviour, opinion and reasoning that are profitable to the monopolies and the government and tend to create a type of person that is easy to manipulate.

The so-called "mass culture" disseminated by the mass media is designed to achieve this aim and is no indication of any real desire to raise the cultural level of the masses. "Mass culture" should not be confused with the creative activity of the people or with genuine professional art. For the most part it consists of commercially profitable potted entertainment and is one of the means of diverting the masses from the real problems of social life, from any thought about the need to change it.

A stream of slander is directed at the countries of the socialist community with the aim of discrediting their material and cultural achievements, their social system, their home and foreign policy, the Marxist-Leninist theory. "Another thing is the visible sharpening of the ideological struggle," the 26th Congress of the CPSU

noted. "For the West it is not confined to the battle of ideas. It employs a whole system of means designed to subvert or soften up the socialist world."[1] The imperialists and their accomplices smear and twist everything that goes on in the socialist countries in order to turn people away from socialism.

Particularly noteworthy is the fact that besides preaching ruthless anti-communism the reactionary forces seek to undermine the principle of peaceful coexistence of countries with different social systems and to torpedo detente. The countries of the socialist community and progressive forces of all countries are fighting to make this principle a reality. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Communists of other countries have made a great contribution to this cause.

Hawkish militarist circles led by American imperialism have launched an unprecedented arms drive and are pushing humanity towards the brink of disaster. They are putting its very future at stake. In view of the seriousness of the international situation the 26th Congress of the CPSU proposed a concrete programme for strengthening peace, a Peace Programme for the 1980s, which is today a focal point of world opinion. It envisages measures for reducing both nuclear-missile and conventional weapons, and proposals on how to settle existing and avert new conflicts and crisis situations, and is permeated with a desire to deepen detente and develop peaceful cooperation among all continents.

The Appeal of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR to the Parliaments and Peoples of the World (June 23, 1981) stresses: "The safeguarding of peace has always been and remains the supreme aim of the foreign policy of the Soviet Union."[2]

The Peace Programme is further developed in the daily foreign-policy activity of that tireless fighter for peace—Leonid Brezhnev. Specifically in his reply to a question from a *Pravda* correspondent, in his replies to the questions from the editors of the West German magazine *Der Spiegel,*[3] and in his speeches during the visit to the FRG (November 23-24, 1981), the Soviet foreign-policy programme is profoundly and concretely expressed and consistently disposes of the arguments peddled by the instigators of war.

Prevention of war presupposes an ideological offensive against the forces of war, unflagging efforts to spread knowledge of the peaceful foreign-policy line of the CPSU and other fraternal parties, and resolute exposure of the antihumane, anti-popular nature

[1] *Pravda,* June 24, 1981.
[2] See *Pravda,* November 3, 1981.
[3] *Pravda,* November 5, 1981.

of contemporary capitalism.

The Conference of CC Secretaries of the Communist and Workers' Parties of the socialist countries (November 3-4, 1981) emphasised:

"The current international situation demands more than at any other time united effort on the part of the socialist countries, all peace-loving forces, all the peoples, in order to bar the road to war and safeguard detente, security and peace on this planet.

"To avert the danger of war and develop international cooperation it is necessary to overcome the influence of reactionary militarist propaganda on the minds of many people in the non-socialist countries, to consistently and logically explain the progressive, peaceful character of the socialist countries' foreign policies."[1]

As Leonid Brezhnev observed, the more aggressive the policies of imperialism become, the more resolutely the peoples rise against it. They are expressing their protests and indignation in Europe, in Asia, in Africa and in America. These united efforts are quite capable of thwarting the schemes of those who seek to trigger a new war (see *Pravda,* October 28, 1981).

Defending as always the fundamental aim of the world communist movement—the creation of a just society throughout the world—the Communists in their ideology and their policies give precedence to the most urgent tasks of defending peace and democracy and the general human moral values that are being trampled by the forces of reaction, fascism and militarism.

Under these conditions the struggle between the bourgeois and socialist ideologies has assumed tremendous global importance. It is a struggle for minds and hearts, for guidance of the historical development of mankind. It demands of us a deep understanding of the international significance of Marxist-Leninist theory, and defence of its principles, its creative development. There is no place here for neutralism or compromise.

The struggle of ideas is one of the forms of the class struggle. It is a struggle in which the world of socialism opposes its principles and values to those of the bourgeois world. Thus the principle of social property and social good is opposed to that of private property; the principle of solidarity and collectivism to that of individualism and selfishness; the principle of internationalism and socialist patriotism to that of nationalism and chauvinism; the principle of the all-round development of the individual to intellectual

[1] *Documents and Resolutions. The 26th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union,* p. 13.

impoverishment and depersonalisation. In other words, the real humanism of socialist society and its ideology is set against the inhuman and anti-human nature of capitalism and its ideology.

The Communist Party regards its theoretical work and the work of political education as an internationalist duty to the working class of the world and all progressive mankind. It stresses the need for a close link-up between revolutionary theory and practice, the solving of the actual problems of communist construction.

Chapter XVII

SCIENCE, ITS PLACE AND ROLE IN THE LIFE OF SOCIETY

Now that we have examined the structure and forms of social consciousness in general, let us consider science, as one of its specific forms closely connected with the whole material and spiritual life of society and playing an ever increasing role in its development.

1. Science as a Special Phenomenon of Social Life

Science comes into being only when society achieves a certain stage of maturity, and the state of science is one of the basic indicators of social progress. The role of science in the development of the society today is so great that the 20th century is often called the "scientific century". The definition is not exhaustive, of course. But it does have a certain justification if we consider the fact that the current scientific and technological revolution would be impossible without natural science, and that the revolutionary transformation of the capitalist system into a socialist system is impossible without the Marxist-Leninist science of society.

But what is science? There is no one answer to this question, because science is a many-sided social phenomenon combining both intellectual and material factors. Nevertheless, the usual definition of science as a *system of knowledge of the world* gives us a starting point.

All knowledge, including scientific knowledge, is regarded by Marxism as *reflection* of nature and social existence. All processes of nature and social life without exception may form the subject-matter of scientific inquiry. This is one of the things that distinguish science from such forms of social consciousness as political or legal ideology, or morality, which reflect only social relations.

Science and religion are forms of man's consciousness of the world, of nature and society, that are essentially opposed to each other. Religion gives a *fantasy* reflection of reality, whereas science, taken as a whole, provides a *true* reflection of nature and society.

The mistaken hypotheses and theories that arise in the process of development of science do not alter this evaluation, because error in science is either the result of the pressure of reactionary ideology or a by-product of the quest for truth. Religion is hostile to reason, whereas science is the highest achievement of human reason, the embodiment of its strength and effectiveness.

Religion appeared long before science, at an early stage of social development, when man was totally dominated by natural and social forces and was quite unable to understand and bend them to his will. The birth of science, on the other hand, is a direct result of man's increased practical power. The development of science and the increasing dominion of man over the spontaneous forces of nature and society are interconnected. As Engels observed, "...it is in the measure that man has learned to change nature that his intelligence has increased".[1] Thus, taking into consideration the opposition between science and religion, we can define science as *a system of objectively true knowledge generalising practice, from which it is acquired and by which it is tested.* But to go any further than this we must bear in mind also the distinction betweeen science and ordinary everyday knowledge, and the distinction between science and art.

Everyday, empirical knowledge acquired directly from practice can exist without science and apart from it. The people of ancient times, for instance, were aware that day regularly follows night or that iron is heavier than wood. Even in our days, the peasant or the craftsman in small-scale production in the economically backward countries makes do with empirical knowledge that has been handed down from generation to generation. Such knowledge also plays a considerable part in everyday life. For example, a mother knows that her child is ill if it develops fever.

The thing that distinguishes science from such empirical knowledge is that science provides knowledge not only of the individual aspects of objects and the external connections between them, but above all tells us the *laws* that govern nature and society. The knowledge that iron is heavier than wood may indeed be acquired without science, but the concept of specific gravity, not to mention the reason for the greater specific gravity of iron, compared with wood, is a matter for physics and chemistry. Awareness of the fact that day follows night is instilled in our consciousness by empirical observation, but we could never explain the causes of the succession of day and night and the periodic lengthening and shortening of the days in the course of the year without

[1] F. Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, p. 231.

astronomy. Fever as a sign of illness can be detected without the help of science, but a correct diagnosis and prescription of the necessary medicines can be made only by medical science based on biology and chemistry.

Art, like science, also plays a cognitive role in respect of the phenomena of social life. Realistic art, like science, can tell us about deep-going social processes. But unlike art, which always expresses the general through the individual, the concrete, science presents the general in the form of abstract logic, by means of concepts and categories.

To sum up, the specific nature of science lies in the fact that it is *the highest generalisation of practice, a generalisation capable of embracing all phenomena of reality, and provides true knowledge of the essence of phenomena and processes, of the laws of nature and society in an abstract, logical form.*

The structure of science is extremely complex, but it can be reduced to three basic interacting components.

First, science includes *empirical knowledge,* and not only the knowledge which is borrowed from ordinary consciousness for the purpose of analysis and generalisation, but also the knowledge obtained through experiments and observation. New theoretical fields in natural science are usually opened up by the experimental discovery of new facts that refuse to "fit" into the framework of the existing theories and for some time may defy a satisfactory theoretical explanation. This was the case with the discovery of radioactivity at the end of the last century; not until 20 years later was it explained as the conversion of chemical elements.

Second, science is a sphere of *theoretical knowledge.* It is the business of theory to explain facts in their totality, to discover the operation of laws in empirical material and to bring these laws together in a unified system. In every field of science the process of accumulation of facts sooner or later leads to the creation of a theory as a system of knowledge, and this is a sure sign that the given field of knowledge is becoming a science in the true sense of the term. Mechanics became a science thanks to Newton, who at the end of the 17th century discovered the basic laws of the motion of bodies and built them into a system. In the second half of the last century the theory of heat evolved into thermodynamics thanks to the discovery of the law of the conservation and conversion of energy and the law of entropy, and the theory of electricity became a genuine science only when Maxwell produced a consistent theory of the electromagnetic field. The same period saw the great work performed by Marx and Engels in converting political economy and sociology into a science.

The essence of science as a theoretical system is its laws, which reflect the objectively necessary, essential connections between phenomena. Another part of theoretical science consists of hypotheses, without which science cannot develop and which in the course of practical testing are either rejected or else corrected, cleansed of error, and become theories.

Third and last, an inseparable part of science is its *philosophical foundations and conclusions*, its world outlook, in which theory finds its direct continuation and culmination. Scientific theory may have varying degrees of universality, and the greater the degree of universality the nearer the given theory comes to philosophy. It is not surprising therefore that the most important synthetic theories of natural science are distinctly philosophical in character. For example, the interpretation of the law of the conservation and conversion of energy and the law of entropy that forms the basis of thermodynamics would be impossible without an elucidation of the philosophical questions of the eternity and infinity of matter and motion, their quantitative and qualitative indestructibility. The theory of relativity establishes the connection between space, time and matter, the quantum theory reveals the interrelation between continuity and discontinuity in the microcosm, and these are not only physical but also philosophical problems.

In the social sciences the ideological factors begin to operate in the interpretation of facts, that is, at the level of theory, whereas in the natural sciences they usually function at the level of philosophical interpretation of theories. For this reason the absolute opposition of science to ideology, which is so characteristic of contemporary bourgeois philosophy and sociology, does not stand up to criticism. Nevertheless one often reads statements about the need to "cleanse" science of ideology, the idea being to "cleanse" the social sciences of Marxism and completely subordinate them to bourgeois ideology.

As for natural science, both positivism and religious philosophy insist on its complete "deideologisation", although from different standpoints. The neopositivist A. J. Ayer and the neo-Thomist Joseph Meurers, representing religious philosophy, agree that natural science can "only measure quantities". For Ayer this is the end of cognition in general, but for Meurers the essence of the phenomena of nature can be known only by philosophy and religion, so natural science can and should be "freed" of tasks that properly belong to philosophy. In this way both philosophers impoverish natural science and limit its scope. In actual fact science is penetraing ever deeper into the essence of phen-

omena and processes and embracing an ever wider picture of the world, and for this reason its philosophical content is steadily increasing.

While it remains primarily a phenomenon of the *spiritual* or intellectual life of society, science is embodied in the sphere of its *material* life. It is a special field of human activity, *both theoretical and practical.* At the earliest stages of scientific development scientists not only contemplated nature, they also acted: they invented instruments, carried out observations, made experiments and thus gathered new facts for science. Take, for example, the ancient astronomical instrument known as the gnomon, invented by the Greeks. This was a column on a horizontal plane which they used to determine not only the altitude of the Sun above the horizon but also the geographical latitude.

In modern times such forms of scientific practice as instrumental observation, and particularly experiment, have been rapidly developed, and today there is not a single science that can do without a solid experimental base. In many branches of science this base demands tremendous expenditure and is technologically far more complex than any form of production. The huge proton synchrotrons (accelerators of charged particles), the spaceships and rockets, the supersensitive instruments that allow us to measure time and space in the microcosm, and much else, are all part of the experimental base of modern science. The creation of this equipment and its control is a very important aspect of practical activity. The division between theory and practice in many branches of science has demanded a division of labour among scientists. For example, experimental physicists conduct experiments, control instruments and provide the first generalisation of the data received, while theoretical physicists devote themselves entirely to generalising experimental data and developing theory.

The main distinguishing feature of practical activity in science is that it is subordinated to the work of acquiring knowledge, of developing theory. Needless to say, the material and spiritual factors are interwoven not only in science but in any field of human endeavour, and the dialectics of the interaction of these factors must be taken into account when considering either of them. Whereas material production and work cannot exist without the spiritual, intellectual element, no form of social consciousness can exist without the material element. This is particularly true of science, which presupposes a number of special forms of practical activity (experiment, observation), which are often known as "practical science". The existence of "practical science" should

not, however, be taken as an argument against regarding science as primarily *a phenomenon of the spiritual life of society, a special form of social consciousness.*

2. The Historical Laws of the Development of Science. Natural and Social Sciences

The main law of science's historical development is *its growing role in production and in the management of society, its growing significance in social life.*

In its *first stage* science is already a response to practical demands, mainly those of production. Atronomy, mathematics and mechanics were called into being by the needs of irrigation, navigation, and the building of great public works such as the pyramids, temples, and so on. Engels notes that "from the very beginning the origin and development of the sciences has been determined by production".[1] But in the ancient world of the Mediterranean and in other pre-capitalist societies science was still only in its infancy; the growth of science and its social significance proceeded very slowly and was sometimes interrupted for centuries. Thus in the Europe of the early Middle Ages many of the scientific discoveries of the ancient world were consigned to oblivion.

This relatively slow development of science was due to the stagnant state of production, that is, to the fact that the basic processes of production in agriculture, stock-raising, craft and building were effected with primitive manual tools and on the basis of traditional empirical knowledge inherited from previous generations. Science was also used on a very modest scale in the administration of society, although arithmetic was needed for purposes of trade and collecting taxes; legal science which appeared together with the codification of the common law achieved an extremely high level in Rome, and the political and philosophical treatises of the ancients were both an important instrument of social orientation and a weapon in the political struggle between the various social forces.

The *second stage* in the history of science begins at the end of the 15th century with the emergence in Europe of modern experimental natural sciences and the simultaneous vigorous growth of the social and political sciences and philosophy. The basic cause of this breakthrough was the conception of the new,

[1] Ibid., p. 184.

bourgeois social structure within the framework of feudalism. "If, after the dark night of the Middle Ages was over, the sciences suddenly arose anew with undreamt-of force, developing at a miraculous rate, once again we owe this miracle to production,"[1] wrote Engels. He saw this time as the starting point of the accelerated development of science, which "gained in force in proportion to the square of the distance (in time) from its point of departure".[2]

The enhanced role of science in social life coincides with its own vigorous progress; moreover, in the interaction between science and production the determining role undoubtedly belongs to the latter. The growth of scientific knowledge, particularly in mechanics and mathematics in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, was directly connected with the needs of developing production, seafaring and trade, and paved the way for the industrial revolution in England in the 18th century. In its turn the transition to machine production gave science a new technical base and a powerful stimulus for further development.

In the 19th century, too, the growth of natural science may be interpreted primarily as a result of the development of the productive forces of bourgeois society. Summing up the history of science, Marx observed that "along with capitalist production the *scientific factor* is for the first time consciously developed, applied and created on a scale of which previous epochs had not the slightest conception".[3]

The period of the rise of capitalism was also marked by the growth of social sciences, which developed in the course of the bourgeoisie's class struggle against feudalism. The progress of socio-political thought was expressed, for example, in the fact that wereas the medieval peasant rebellions and even the first bourgeois revolutions in Europe had been compelled to seek the ideological grounds for their aspirations in religion, the mass movement in the French bourgeois revolution was able to base itself on the socio-political and philosophical ideas of the 18th century Enlightenment.

In the 19th century the creation of the Marxist theory of scientific socialism as the highest generalisation of the revolutionary movement of the working class signified a veritable revolution in the development of the social sciences. The discovery of the materialist understanding of history provided the social sciences and

[1] K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*, pp. 184-85.
[2] Ibid., pp. 22-23.
[3] Ibid., Vol. 47, p. 556 (in Russian).

humanities with the theoretical basis for further progress. The founders of Marxism brought about a qualitative leap in the development of philosophy, sociology and political economy, but the creative application of the Marxist method that was to transform the social sciences as a whole had only just begun.

The *third stage* in the development of science and the transformation of its social role begins in the 20th century. At this stage we see not only the further acceleration of scientific progress but also a substantial change in the relationship between science and practice. The development of science now becomes the point of departure for the revolutionising of practice, for creating new branches of production.

The enhanced social role of science is an important feature of the development of society. At the same time scientific development has its own internal logic, its own intrinsic features.

Science first appeared as an undivided whole; in Ancient Greece, for instance, it was inseparable from philosophy. But even then the process of *differentiation* of scientific knowledge was already at work. This one and undivided science began to branch out into natural sciences, social sciences, mathematics and philosophy. Mathematics occupies a special place in the system of the sciences. It is more closely connected with the natural than with the social sciences and in many cases may be regarded as one of them. On the other hand philosophy may be considered together with the social sciences. The two fundamental groups of sciences—*natural* and *social*—have certain features in common but play a substantially different part in social life. The growing application of scientific knowledge has brought into being the so-called *applied sciences*. These are mainly *technical* sciences that study the operation of the laws of physics and chemistry in technical devices. Their rapid growth began at the close of the 19th century and they are the immediate driving force of technological progress both in production and in the war industry. They also include the agricultural and medical sciences, which study the operation and use of the laws of living nature in farming and in the treatment of disease. All these sciences are directly connected with the natural sciences.

The basic function of the natural and technical sciences is to serve society by providing knowledge of nature and of man-made machines, and to help create new technical means. The various classes of society, inasmuch as they are interested in production and its development, make equal use of the laws of natural sciences and technological systems. Hence it follows that the basic content of these sciences has no class character and the class struggle leaves its imprint on natural sciences only when philosophical questions

are involved.

The situation is quite different in the social sciences. Their subject-matter directly influences the interests of different classes and their basic content has therefore a class character. For example, the bourgeoisie and the working class cannot adhere to the same point of view over the question of the nature of capitalist profit, the essential nature of the state, and so on. Hence in the social sciences the battle of opinions that is usual in every science becomes a class battle as well. The development of the social sciences is directly connected, not with the growth of the productive forces, but with the development of the relations of production, and thus with the whole system of social relations, with the management of society, and for this reason class interests exert a massive influence on these sciences.

In recent decades the process of differentiation of the sciences has been particularly rapid. The fundamental natural sciences (physics, chemistry, biology, geology, astronomy) are developing into complexes of increasingly numerous disciplines which gradually grow into separate specialised sciences. We are also witnessing the emergence of overlapping spheres of knowledge, which play an increasingly important part (biochemistry, geophysics, biophysics, geochemistry, physical chemistry, etc.). A similar differentiation is to be observed in the social sciences as well.

At the same time, however, another tendency is at work—that of *integration* of scientific knowledge. In the natural sciences this is expressed in the growing role of mathematics and its methods, and also that of theoretical physics. In the social sciences the same tendency finds expression in the steady conquest by Marxist theory, which is synthetic in character, of all the social sciences without exception, and also in the spread of mathematical methods in the social sciences. The tendency towards synthesis, towards the integration of science, including both its fundamental branches—natural and social—is today moving from strength to strength. This tendency certainly does not imply going back to the beginning, to the undivided science of ancient times; it marks the establishment of a new, dialectical unity of all the sciences, a unity within a growing diversity.

The *increasing relative independence* of science should also be considered one of the general features of its development. The inner resources of science are providing ever more powerful stimuli for its further development if only because the greater the sum of accumulated knowledge the more appreciable is the "pressure" it exerts in posing new problems. The scientist has to master what has been created before him, and this means that he, as Engels obser-

ved, "...possesses in every sphere of science material which has formed itself independently out of the thought of previous generations and has gone through its own independent course of development in the brains of these successive generations".[1]

The overall growth of knowledge exerts a powerful influence on the structure of science inasmuch as it demands an increasing division of labour between scientists. This factor in its turn tends to enhance the independence of science because in a context of diversification and multiple division of labour the training of scientists and their replacement becomes an ever more complex problem.

Nevertheless the independence of science was and still remains relative. Its progress even in the 20th century has been conditioned ultimately by practice, by the needs of production, of government, by military needs (while imperialism continues to exist), by the class struggle and the need to preserve human health and the natural environment and to educate the growing generation. But the wider the field of scientific activity and the deeper the division of labour within it, the greater the significance of the inner logic of the development of science, of its intrinsic sources of progress.

The most important inner source of development of science is the ideological struggle between its various trends of schools and between individual scientists. The struggle of ideas and opinions has always advanced science. Without this and without free criticism science may turn into a dogma, stagnate or fall behind in its development. The higher the level of science, the greater the significance of the struggle of opinions in solving scientific problems, although these very problems are ultimately generated by the needs of practice.

The increasing role of science in the life of society is visibly expressed in the mounting numbers of scientists, the increased spending on research and the expanding system of scientific institutions.

A century ago there were no more than a few tens of thousands of scientists in the world; today there are millions. Their numbers are increasing particularly rapidly in the socialist countries. Prerevolutionary Russia had about 10,000 scientists. In the Soviet Union before the outbreak of war in 1941 there were already 98,300 scientists, by 1950 the figure was 162,500, in 1960 it had risen to 354,200, and in 1978 the total was 1,314,000.

The social role of science, of course, is measured not by the numbers of scientists; of great importance, too, is the rapid growth of expenditure on science, which makes it possible to finance not

[1] F. Engels to F. Mehring in Berlin. London, July 14, 1893, in: K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 434.

only the work of scientists and their assistants but also to pay the hundreds of thousands of workers, technicians and engineers who fulfil orders for scientific instruments and equipment, who print and distribute scientific papers, and so on.

Even so, quantitative indices do not tell the whole story. Today both in the sphere of production and in the sphere of science a swing is taking place from extensive to intensive development. This highlights the question of how to raise the effectiveness of society's investments in scince, and how to increase the efficiency of scientific research.

Scientific development is so important both for the present and for the future that it has become a major sphere of competition between the capitalist countries and also of the competition and struggle between the two world social systems. Industrial and military might today depends to a great extent on investment in science, the degree of its effectiveness, the rate of the scientific and technological revolution and the rapid application of its results in production. Today the USSR is spending a greater percentage of its national income on the development of research than the United States. The main task at present is to further improve the effectiveness of investment in science.

This depends on the degree of qualification of scientists and the *organisation of scientific research.* It is no accident that systematic attempts are being made to attract the most capable scientists, engineers and doctors in the developing countries to the USA and other advanced countries of the West with the lure of higher salaries and better research facilities.

The structure of research establishments and their work organisation differ considerably in the capitalist and socialist countries. Today there are three basic types of scientific institutions in both parts of the world.

First, there are scientific institutions working on fundamental problems in the main fields of the natural and social sciences. Most of them are academic research institutes, which employ a numerically small but highly qualified portion of the country's scientists. The significance of these scientific institutions has risen sharply in recent decades because the time gap between the discovery of new laws of nature and their technical application is shrinking and the country's scientific, technical and military potential depends first and foremost on the organisation of research and development, and its level.

Second, a considerable portion of scientific manpower is concentrated in the so-called subsidiary or applied research institutes, particularly the technological, medical and agricultural and similar

institutes, and also in factory research centres and laboratories. These scientific centres and research groups are directly engaged in solving the concrete problems of technological progress and form a bridge between "pure" natural science and production. In the capitalist countries the bulk of such scientific institutions is set up and controlled by the monopolies. In the USSR and some other socialist countries they are subordinate to industrial, construction, agricultural and other ministries and departments. The acceleration of scientific and technological progress presupposes a considerable expansion of research and development in industry itself. This involves the setting up of design offices and extensive experimental facilities at enterprises and the attraction of a large number of scientific personnel into industry. The creation of big industrial research organisations that link up research institutions with production enterprises produces a notable economic effect.

Third, a large number of scientists are concentrated in the universities and other higher educational establishments, where work on both the fundamental and applied problems of science is closely connected with the training of engineers, doctors, agronomists and scientists. In the USSR the teaching staffs of higher educational establishments cooperate on a permanent basis with the research institutes of Academies of Sciences, with the specialised institutes and with factory laboratories, make contracts with enterprises and fulfil them, and thus attract a considerable portion of their students into active scientific research.

The USSR thus possesses a widely ramified system of scientific institutions that are on the whole adapted to practical needs. The socialist system with its planned economy has shown its advantages over capitalism in this vital field, too.

The lag in research work inherited from tsarist Russia was overcome in a relatively short historical period. In a number of fields Soviet science and technology now hold a leading place in the world. Science is developing rapidly in other socialist countries as well. Links between the scientists of the socialist countries are being strengthened and this speeds up the growth of the scientific potential of each country and the community as a whole.

However, the forms of organisation of science under socialism are not immutable. They are subordinated to the task of raising its effectiveness. This concerns both the structure of the network of scientific establishments, their links with production and with the managerial sphere, and also the organisational structure of the institutions themselves, its increased flexibility, the introduction of changes in salary rates for research workers, in the system of certifying scientific competence, and in the principles of directing

research institutes. One cannot fail to see this *adjustment of the forms of organisation of science*, which is determined by the level of the productive forces, the economic system of society and the degree of development of science itself, as one of the most important *laws of its historical development.*

3. The Scientific and Technological Revolution and the Social Revolution

The scientific and technological revolution that began in the middle of the present century was heralded by the revolution in physics at the beginning of the century. The STR displays the characteristic features of the new, third stage in the development of science (see Section 1 of the present chapter) and its greatly enhanced importance in social life. The essence of the STR lies in the combination of scientific progress and radical change in the technological basis of social production. The STR is the contemporary mode of development of the productive forces of society, when science is becoming a *direct productive force.* This transformation was noted by Marx in the middle of the last century. Marx's thesis calls for some explanation. If science, as we said earlier, is a system of knowledge, a spiritual force, how can it also be considered a material productive force?

In answering this question we must remember the dialectics of the material and spiritual elements in social life according to which these elements must not only interact but also interpenetrate one another. The spiritual factor does always, in fact, in some way or another enter into the productive forces, inasmuch as the worker's consciousness and will participate in the process of labour. In present-day conditions, when production is making ever wider use of scientific data, the spiritual forces not only of the workers directly engaged in changing natural substances with tools, but also of engineers and scientists take part in the process.

The characteristic feature of the present stage in the development of science, i.e., the scientific and technological revolution, is the tremendously increased importance of feedback *from science into production.* Here we have a fundamental distinction between the position as it is today and as it was a few decades ago. There can be no doubt, of course, that even in the 19th century science was being ever more widely applied in production, but the main branches of production nevertheless preserved their traditional character. Metallurgy remained the production of iron and other metals from ore; the food industry was confined to the processing

of agricultural produce, although the discoveries of Pasteur undoubtedly started a revolution in the sphere of food preservation.

In the 20th century, however, branches of production are coming into being that rely directly on the latest scientific discoveries, and the time gap between these discoveries and the appearance of corresponding forms of production is being constantly reduced, while the link-up between experimental research and industrial technology is becoming increasingly direct. This is true of the radio engineering industry, which began with the experiments of Hertz and Popov and later of Langmuir, and is now moving ahead on the basis of semiconductor physics. This is also true of the synthetics industry, which takes its methods directly from the scientific laboratories. Just as directly science determines the technology in industries that manufacture antibiotics and herbicides, rocket equipment and computers.

In all these and many other industries that are acquiring increasing significance in social life scientific progress is the decisive factor in the progress of technology and the productive forces as a whole. The rate of development of production is now determined mainly by the rate of progress of science, inasmuch as the "scientific branches" of industry are acquiring ever greater significance compared with the traditional industries, while even these are not standing still but are moving ahead on the basis of modern science.

To evaluate the prospects opened up by the scientific and technological revolution, let us review the changes that will probably occur over the next few decades in the character of the objects of labour (material), the means of labour (the working machine) and the sources of energy that sets the means of labour into operation.

At present industry is mainly dependent on natural materials, extracted from the earth and refined with the help of mechanical devices and chemical treatment, and also natural materials of organic origin—timber, cotton, wool, rubber, etc., obtained in agriculture and forestry. But the methods evolved by chemistry and solid-state physics for obtaining synthetic materials with pre-set properties have begun to play an ever increasing role.

There are tremendous reserves of growth in the creation of robot machines even at the present level of natural science. For example, the problems of reducing weight and improving design occupy large teams of research workers in engineering. But even here the prospects of development are determined by the application of new scientific principles to technology. Automation, which aims at freeing not only the worker's hands and eyes but also his brain from direct intervention in the production process, has become the watchword of the current technological revolution. The

building of automatic assembly lines, workshops and factories is now the most important trend in scientific and technological progress, the basic means of achieving a steep rise in labour productivity. Automation presupposes the introduction of computers and electronic control devices in industry, construction and transport. The development of cybernetics and electronics determines the prospects and rate of automation of production, the installation of automatic control systems not only by individual enterprises but also by whole industries and the non-industrial spheres.

Much is being done and will be done in power engineering to raise the capacity and efficiency of thermo- and hydroelectric stations. But it is the fundamental natural sciences that will solve the problem of finding new inexhaustible sources of energy. Atomic power stations are already playing a certain part, particularly in areas where energy is in short supply. In the not so distant future mankind will rid itself of the need to ransack the "storehouses" of the earth and to burn precious chemical raw materials (coal, gas, oil), or to flood hundreds of thousands of acres of valuable land in building hydroelectric stations. This can be achieved, on the one hand, by using such inexhaustible constant sources of energy as solar radiation and tidal power and, on the other, by solving the scientific problem of the taming of plasma by means of powerful magnetic fields and lasers, and by converting into electricity the colossal energy released during the synthesis of light nuclei.

Thus modern science has a double task to solve, that of improving the existing methods of production and of discovering fundamentally new methods with the emphasis on the latter.

All that has been said refers not only to production, although the application of science to production is undoubtedly the main trend. Scientific and technological progress embraces the sphere of communications, transport, everyday life, sport, etc. A specially important sphere of the application of science in the competition between the two systems is the sphere of military technology.

The STR is dialectically linked with the social revolution. It takes place in the context of the struggle between socialism and capitalism. In the developed capitalist countries it signifies a growth of the productive forces that comes into ever deeper contradictions with the obsolete production relations and the bourgeois state that guards them and it thus objectively prepares the ground for the socialist transformation of society. In the countries that have taken the socialist road, the development of the scientific and technological revolution accelerates social progress. The combining of the advantages of socialism with the STR is one of the vital tasks that the CPSU has set the Soviet people. "...Only in the conditions of

socialism," Leonid Brezhnev stressed in the Central Committee's report to the 25th Congress of the CPSU, "does the scientific and technological revolution take its true orientation consistent with the interests of man and society. In turn the ultimate aims of the social revolution, the building of a communist society, can be achieved only on the basis of accelerated development of science and technology".

The most profound contradictions of contemporary capitalism are connected with the development and application of science. Capitalism stimulates the development of contemporary science because it regards it as a means not only of increasing profits but also of its own self-preservation. Today the ruling circles of the main imperialist powers are banking on acceleration of the scientific and technological revolution and application of its results to reinforce their class supremacy and to win the contest against the socialist countries. The bulk of the allocations to science are contributed by the monopolies, which regard science as the most profitable investment of capital; but the expenditure of the bourgeois state in this field is also increasing.

At the same time a remarkable reassessment of scientific progress is taking place in bourgeois literature. During the "great depression" of 1928-1932, science was accused of being responsible for the economic troubles. In the first years after the Second World War attempts were made to blame science for Hiroshima and for the possibility of the nuclear annihilation of mankind. Many notable Western ideologists were inclined to take an extremely pessimistic view of the consequences of scientific and technological progress. This trend is clearly manifested in the technocratic theories of "zero growth" of industry in the name of protecting the natural environment. But ever since the late 50s, when the scientific and technological revolution got fully under way, an opposite trend has been observable among bourgeois economists and politicians and subsequently among sociologists and philosophers. They have come more and more to rely on scientific and technological progress as the force that will allow capitalism to compensate for the loss of its colonies, to damp down its internal class contradictions and not only survive but win the competition with socialism. Western sociology is becoming more and more influenced by the so-called "technocratic" theories, which suggest that power should be transferred to a narrow circle of "technocrats", although this in fact means leaving it in the hands of monopoly capital. Renaming capitalism the "post-industrial" or the "technotronic" society does not change matters.

This contradictory evaluation of the role of science by bourgeois

social thinkers, although it is a distorted picture of reality, does testify in its own way to the aggravation of the profound contradictions in the role of science under capitalism, contradictions that were pointed out long ago by Marxism. What are these contradictions?

First, modern science under the pressure of the selfish interests of capital is being increasingly used against the interests of the working people. "*...The exploitation of science,* of mankind's theoretical progress. Capital does not create science but it exploits it, and appropriates it for production needs," Marx wrote more than a century ago. The result is that "*science as science applied* to production is being *divorced from the immediate labour process*".[1]

This contradiction has become extremely acute in the epoch of state-monopoly capitalism. The arms race, which swallows up billions of dollars, and the imperialist threat of a global nuclear war illustrate the fact that capitalism turns the achievements of science against the interests of the peoples.

On the other hand, inasmuch as the bourgeois system develops the productive forces it also stimulates the development of natural science. Technical progress and scientific progress go hand in hand; one is impossible without the other. But at the same time capitalism gives rise to increasingly powerful trends that operate against the development of production and natural science. This means that the truly inexhaustible possibilities of scientific progress and its application are by no means fully realised.

It should be remembered that ideological contradictions are also becoming more acute under capitalism. Capital needs science only as a means of developing technology. But science cannot do without a world outlook, without a philosophical basis. The natural sciences spontaneously adopt materialist positions, and since the end of the 19th century under the pressure of facts they become increasingly imbued with the ideas of development, of dialectics. At the same time the ideological needs of the bourgeoisie demand the preservation of religion and the idealist philosophy associated with it, which is bound to have a substantial influence on the philosophical views of the majority of scientists, who by their origin, education or social status are connected with the property-owning classes.

Even more acute are the contradictions in the development of the social sciences under state-monopoly capitalism. In the period of its rise to power the bourgeoisie was interested to some extent in objective knowledge of history, but since history has ceased to work in favour of capitalism the bourgeoisie and its ideologists

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *Collected Works,* Vol. 47, p. 554 (in Russian).

played down the significance of objective laws and scientific truth. Even today, however, the bourgeoisie and the monopolistic state need economics and sociology, literary studies and historical science, philosophy and jurisprudence because they cannot administer society without them or maintain their ideological supremacy. The economists, lawyers and sociologists who serve the monopolies and the bourgeois state give recommendations based on the study of the market, the existing codes of law, the activity of working-class organisations, methods of labour organisation, human relations problems in industry, and a host of other subjects.

But the use of the social sciences by capitalism is inevitably restricted by two basic factors.

First, the spontaneous development of the capitalist economy does not allow *all-round* direction and planning of the economy. Bourgeois economists succeed in forecasting industrial recessions or monetary crises with a certain degree of probability, although their forecasts allow very wide margins. But no forecasts or predictions can save capitalist production and the monetary system from crisis situations. This does not mean, of course, that the forecasts of bourgeois economists and futurologists should be ignored by Marxists.

Second, bourgeois social science in trying by various means to justify the existence of the system that brought it into being is fundamentally mistaken in its evaluation of the laws and prospects of the development of capitalism. It is Marxism-Leninism that gives a genuinely scientific picture of the life and prospects of development of bourgeois society.

In contrast to capitalist society, socialism cannot develop without making increased use of social science in the process of changing social relations. The development of socialism implies constant improvement of the methods of running a planned economy and hence the employment of the economic sciences and sociology, the theory of scientific communism, legal science, etc., for the purpose of achieving conscious control of the new social relations.

This finds its practical expression in the improvement of planning in the USSR and other socialist countries. Besides the annual plans, long-term five-year plans and prospective plans for even longer periods (up to 1990) are drawn up. Planning is becoming more scientifically based and efficient, embracing culture and the problems of the development of science itself. The scientific level of planning is rising. Planning now takes place at the inter-state level: the socialist countries belonging to the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance coordinate their national economic plans; a long-term comprehensive programme of economic integration for

the socialist countries has been worked out, involving a closer alignment of their economies, gradual levelling up of their economic development and the formation of close and stable ties in the basic branches of the economy, science and technology.

The essence of the revolution in the status of science and in its social role was expressed by Lenin soon after the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia in the following words: "In the old days, human genius, the brain of man, created only to give some the benefits of technology and culture, and to deprive others of the bare necessities, education and development. From now on all the marvels of technology and the gains of culture belong to the nation as a whole, and never again will man's brain and human genius be used for oppression and exploitation."[1]

The advantages of socialism will make themselves felt even more when the further prospects of the scientific and technological revolution, which have already captured the imagination of scientists, become a reality.

This revolution opens the way for a radical transformation of nature, including the climate and the water regime of whole geographical areas, the reclamation of vast stretches of deserts and marshland for habitation and productive use in the interests of society. Particularly important is the exploration and use of the world ocean, which as yet is very little used as a source of food and mineral raw materials. The cultivation of the ocean will call to life new spheres of technology and new industries.

The prerequisites already created by the development of science and technology allow us to discuss the need to change the face of cities and whole industrial areas that have turned into polluted, smoke-ridden "conurbations" that are unfit to live in, and thus consider the rational distribution of industry and population and the preservation of nature.

The transformation of nature and the material conditions of existence of mankind presupposes a change in man himself. Biology and medicine are now closely concerned with the problems of transplanting certain organs of the human body, the eradication of virus and cancerous diseases, the control of human heredity and a substantial increase in the human life span. As for the social perfecting of man, this involves the elimination of exploitation, the abolition of violence and wars, and of national and racial inequality.

The accomplishment of these impressive tasks, which are already

[1] V. I. Lenin, *The Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, January 10-18 (23-31), 1918*, Vol. 26, pp. 481-82.

posed by contemporary science and practice, demands the planned and comprehensive use of the achievements of the natural and social sciences for the good of the working masses, and this is impossible in the conditions of capitalism; it goes against its fundamental principles. The people rightly look towards a fundamental change in social relations to bring about the ultimate solution, on a scientific basis, of such global problems of human development as raw materials, food, energy, and protection of the natural environment.

With great insight Engels noted a century ago that all our, that is, human mastery of nature "...consists in the fact that we have the advantage over all other creatures of being able to learn its laws and apply them correctly".[1] But as yet we take into consideration only the immediate consequences of our influence over nature, while the further consequences not only escape our control but are in the great majority of cases quite the reverse of the initial result. If we are to control and regulate these consequences as well, Engels emphasised, there must be "something more than mere knowledge. It requires a complete revolution in our hitherto existing mode of production, and simultaneously a revolution in our whole contemporary social order".[2] The victory of socialism followed by the construction of communism is the basic requisite for the realisation of the prospective tasks of the scientific and technological revolution and for its further advance.

"In thinking about the future, we attach much importance to science," Leonid Brezhnev has stated. "It has to make a tremendous contribution to fulfilling the most important tasks of communist construction, including: the discovery of new sources of energy and substitutes for many types of natural resources; the technical re-equipment of the economy aimed at minimising manual and especially arduous physical labour; raising agricultural production; combatting disease, and increasing the human life-span."[3]

Thus the growth of the role of science in the life of society will lead in the course of time to its occupying a leading place in the whole system of social consciousness and exerting an ever increasing influence on the development of social existence.

1 F. Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, p. 180.
2 Ibid., p. 182.
3 L. I. Brezhnev, *The Great October Revolution and Mankind's Progress.* Report at a Jubilee Meeting of the Central Committee of the CPSU, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, and the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR to Mark the 60th Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution, November 2, 1977, Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, Moscow, 1977, p. 16.

Chapter XVIII

SOCIETY AND THE INDIVIDUAL

The interrelationship between society and the individual is one of the most important spheres of social knowledge. It is of great importance in the practical work of building the new society, whose aim is to abolish all forms of exploitation and alienation, and create real conditions for the emancipation of the individual, for his free and all-round development. In this chapter we shall consider the nature and essence of the individual, the social conditions that bear upon his life and activity, and the prerequisites for the harmonious combination of individual interests with the interests of society.

1. What Is an Individual?

To discover the meaning of the concept of the individual we must first define the essence of man as a social being, because individuals exist only in human society. According to Marx, "the essence of man is no abstraction inherent in each single individual. In its reality it is the ensemble of the social relations".[1] This thesis of Marx is primarily a criticism of Feuerbach, who in his interpretation of the human essence proceeded from the notion of the isolated individual and believed that the individuals who constitute society are connected with one another *"in a natural way"*. Feuerbach failed to see that "...the abstract individual which he analyses belongs to a particular form of society".[2] We can understand what man is at a certain stage, what his characteristic features are and explain why he has one and not another social image only by considering the system of social relations in the given society.

Social relations determine to a considerable degree man's biophysical and to an even greater degree his psychological and other peculiarities.

From the Marxist definition of the *essence of man as the ensemble of all social relations* it by no means follows that Marxism reduces man entirely to this social essence, that man's attributes are

[1] K.Marx, *Theses on Feuerbach*, Vol. 5, p. 4.
[2] Ibid., pp. 4, 5.

not connected with his physical existence. When we consider man as an individual, he confronts us as "the aggregate of those mental and physical capabilities, existing in a human being...".[1]

Thus, to a certain extent man is a bio-social being; social because he possesses a social essence; biological because the bearer of this essence is a living human organism.

The concept "man" is a generic concept expressing general features inherent in the human race. A single member of the human race is usually known as an individual, but he possesses both general and individual features. The individual, as Marx put it, is "a *particular* individual (and it is precisely his particularity which makes him an individual and a real *individual* social being) ... ".[2]

The concept of personality is inseparably linked with the concept of individuality.

Individuality is expressed in a person's natural gifts and psychological qualities, in such specific features as memory, imagination, temperament, character—all the diversity of human qualities and activities. The whole content of the consciousness—opinions, judgements, views, which even when shared by different people always have something of their "own"—also has an individual colouring. Every person's demands and needs are individualised and he leaves his individual mark on everything he does. An individual is a human being regarded both from the standpoint of his general qualities and features and from the standpoint of the individuality of his social, spiritual and physical qualities. These qualities may be positive or negative and usually combine, in varying proportions, both merits and shortcomings.

A universal attribute of human beings is *social activity*. It is this that distinguishes them from the rest of the world. Man is above all a doer, an active social being who changes his conditions of life. He is not only a socially active but a *socially thinking and feeling* being, and all these qualities are inseparably interconnected. Since social relations change in the course of historical development, social types also change and their individual embodiments accordingly appear and disappear. When there exists in society a social type known as the bourgeoisie, this type is individualised in every bourgeois.

So, when analysing the problem of man we must proceed from the conditions of the epoch, of the social structure of the given social-economic formation.

[1] K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 164.
[2] K. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, Vol. 3, p. 299.

The Marxist definition of the essence of man and human personality is concretely historical in its approach, whereas bourgeois philosophy and sociology are characteristically anti-historical.

For example, there are some theories that reduce the whole of man's life activity to the manifestation of his "natural" (physical, biological) essence. These theories ignore human history and the laws of social development. The advocates of such biological and psychological theories talk about the "property-owning instinct", the "instinct of accumulation", "selfishness", "aggressiveness" and even the "killer instinct". This kind of interpretation of human nature fosters the legend of the intellectual and moral inequality of races and sexes.

There are also theories which, although they make a certain appeal to the social factor, regard inclinations rooted in a person's mentality in the form of uncontrollable urges as the determining basis of man's consciousness and behaviour. Such, for example, is the conception of "reformed", reconstructed psycho-analysis (neo-Freudianism). One of its prominent representatives, Erich Fromm, states outright that the individual's thoughts, feelings and actions should be regarded as springing from dormant tendencies that await a convenient opportunity to express themselves.[1] Fromm attributes such phenomena as unquestioning obedience or, on the contrary, the lust for power, passive, blind compliance with existing social system, (conformism), or the destructive urge, to the operation of special psychological forces. His theory is that these forces have their roots in what he calls the "generic trauma", which overtook man when in the course of his emergence from the animal world he acquired the consciousness of his separateness from the whole environment, his alienation from nature and other men. Although Fromm also considers the social factor, showing how the economic and political reality of, for example, the capitalist world intensifies the feeling of human alienation, in the long run he remains true to the Freudian proposition that the psychological forces are primary.

In reality we are confronted not with certain eternally given psychological inclinations, but with the fact that people are the products of historically changing social conditions and circumstances and change with them. At the same time it is man who makes history. For this reason what is needed to change people in the mass is not psychotherapy, as psycho-analysis suggests, but their historical action, revolutionary practice, and radical transformation of the social conditions of their life.

[1] See E. Fromm, *Escape from Freedom*, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York, 1964, p. 180.

2. The Interests of Society, the Social Group and the Individual

The interrelationship of society and the individual is above all an interrelationship of their *interests*.

Because ever since the beginning of the social differentiation of society the individual has been a member of one or another social group, the interrelationship between the interests of the individual and the interests of society reflects the relations between the interests of the social group to which the individual belongs and the interests of society. But these relations are quite different in class-divided society from what they are in a society that is free of antagonisms. We must therefore take a concretely historical and primarily class approach to the problem of the individual and society. The absence of such an approach before the appearance of Marxism was the basic cause of the metaphysical, unscientific treatment of this problem.

If we examine the pre-Marxist history of social thought we encounter conceptions that regard the interests of the individual and those of society as incompatible. The ancient proverb runs: "*Homo homini lupus est*—Man unto man is a wolf." This formula was revived in the 17th century by the English philosopher Thomas Hobbes. It is still very much alive. Its popularisers maintain that the tragedy of human life is caused not by the contradictions and conflicts of classes, but by the contradictions and conflicts between the individual and society, which by their very "nature" are ineradicable.

From this premise bourgeois theoreticians draw two extreme conclusions.

Some of them absolutise the personal claims of the individual, demanding complete "freedom" of the individual from society (bourgeois-individualist and anarchist conceptions); others, on the contrary, demand that the individual should give up the very notion of independence. Hobbes, for example, maintained that the state was the "sole and sovereign individual", which did not recognise any individual besides itself. Man must therefore renounce his rights and grant the state unlimited power over himself.

Both these points of view join in acknowledging the hostility between the individual and society. The only difference between them is that the first seeks an escape from the conflict by proclaiming the unlimited freedom of the individual, particularly the "strong personality", while the second demands the suppression of individuality and its absorption by society, the state, and so on.

In contrast to such conceptions, Marxism-Leninism regards the conflict between the individual and society as a product of certain social relations, above all, the relations based on private ownership of the means of production. The essence of this conflict is that the development of a society dominated by private ownership takes place at the expense of the interests of the majority of its members. In these conditions *individual interests are opposed to the interests of society.*

But what are the interests of society? They should be interpreted not simply as the sum total of the interests of all its members. The interests of society are what it needs to function as a social organism on the basis of its inherent objective laws of development. The fundamental basis of this social process is the progressive development of the productive forces of society; and the modes of production change historically.

Whereas at one time it was in the interests of society to establish private ownership of the means of production, separation of intellectual work from manual labour, concentration of the means of education among the "upper" sections of society, who had sufficient time for the higher forms of activity, today the interests of society demand the abolition of both private ownership of the means of production and the antithesis between intellectual and manual labour. This in its turn demands the socialist reorganisation of society.

Under socialism, where private ownership of the means of production and private management of the economy are replaced by social ownership and social guidance of economic processes, the fundamental interests of classes become ever more closely allied. Indeed, all material and spiritual wealth is created by the combined activity of all social groups of socialist society under the leadership of the Communist Party and is used for the benefit of the working people.

Under socialism society forms an integrated *collective entity.* All the groups of which it is composed—social communities, work collectives, various kinds of associations—are bound together by the community of their interests, which is rooted in the material needs of the whole of society.

But every group also has its own specific interests, which raises the problem of how they are to be combined with the social interests. This combination of interests has both its objective and subjective sides. The objective side is expressed in the conditions achieved that make it possible to satisfy the needs of a particular group. The subjective side manifests itself in the actions of people, which may assist in combining social and group interests but may

also hinder it. There are cases when group interests are ignored on the pretext of concern for the interests of society as a whole or, on the contrary, when group interests are allowed to overshadow social interests. This means that the process of combining them correctly presupposes corresponding organisation of this process, its direction and the avoidance of subjective distortions. But we may encounter situations when certain contradictions arise between these interests. In such a situation the only correct and unavoidable principle is to give priority to the broader interests. This involves not only coordination but also subordination of interests.

Discussing the correlation of different communities and groups in his article "A Draft Programme of Our Party", Lenin suggested that the statement on the overthrow of the autocracy should be motivated by a reference to the interests not only of the working class but of the whole development of society. Such a reference was essential "in regard to theory because, from the standpoint of the basic ideas of Marxism, the interests of social development are higher than the interests of the proletariat—the interests of the working-class movement as a whole are higher than the interests of a separate section of the workers...".[1]

Generally speaking, even complete harmony between the interests of society and group interests does not imply their total identity. When society becomes socially homogeneous, when classes, nations disappear, society will still not become structureless. Various forms of activity will have corresponding collectives and groups with their specific needs.

This higher collectivity, which will be achieved in the age of complete communism, grows out of socialist society and on its basis, and its prerequisite is the developed and strengthening collective unity that is achieved under socialism.

The bourgeois critics of socialism often bring up the idea of the inevitability of the "eternal alienation" of man's essential nature, powers and potential from man himself. According to this theory, which has today become extremely fashionable in bourgeois philosophy and sociology, the true essence of man is alienated from the living individual and this alienation allegedly remains the inexorable fate of man, which he can never overcome in any historical circumstances.

In reality, however, man is not eternally condemned to *alienation.* Alienation is engendered by quite definite social-economic conditions and is, in the words of Marx, "a result of the *movement*

[1] V. I. Lenin, *A Draft Programme of Our Party,* Vol. 4, p. 236.

of private property". It is private ownership of the means of production that has created alienation, which is due to the worker's being deprived of what he produces and the transformation of his work into forced labour. From this it follows that with the replacement of private ownership of the means of production by social ownership and the abolition on this basis of the exploiting classes the alienation of labour disappears.

Political alienation is due to the fact that the bourgeois state is a force which is becoming more and more alienated from society, from the people. The bourgeois state is alien and hostile to the interests of the working people because of its class nature. The socialist state, on the other hand, is an instrument for the abolition of all kinds and forms of exploitation and alienation and for the creation of a society that corresponds to the interests of the working people.

Of course, socialist society is not yet entirely free of the birth-marks of the old system from which it sprang. These birth-marks include bureaucratic attitudes and such ideological survivals in people's consciousness as religion. All these and other phenomena alien to the nature of socialism are being gradually eliminated; society thus liberates itself from the elements of alienation.

The theory of "eternal alienation" is a variant of the old notion of the inevitability of conflict beween the individual and society. The development of socialism provides the practical refutation of this idea and demonstrates the growing unity of society and the individual, the possibility of the successful combination of social, group and personal interests.

3. The Collective and the Individual

The individual's personal interests demand the satisfaction of his needs and the development of his gifts, energies and abilities.

Human beings need food, clothing, a place to live, fuel, the objects of everyday life, means of lighting, transport, etc. Many of these needs are connected with their existence as biological organisms. But they have a social rather than a biological nature inasmuch as they arise and develop only in a social environment. Society creates both the needs and the means of their satisfaction. But the social colouring of human needs is expressed in more ways than this. The structure of society quite often creates wide gaps between the needs of people belonging to its various classes.

It is impossible, of course, to draw an exact line defining needs for all time. Production is developing and the making of new

consumer goods creates new demands.

The slogan of communism is: "From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs." This slogan presupposes the satisfaction of the reasonable needs of every member of society in constantly increasing measure. The concept of "reasonable needs" is sufficiently definite. Its meaning precludes the possibility, on the one hand, of turning appropriation, satisfaction of needs into an aim in itself. On the other hand, it also precludes the fixing of "a certain minimum" of needs, a "certain restricted amount".

The principle of acquisition for acquisition's sake is as alien to socialism as the ascetic principle of denying oneself earthly goods. The aim of socialist production is the ever fuller satisfaction of the constantly growing needs of the working people. This means, specifically, a steady reduction of the gap between high and relatively low incomes, and also increasing satisfaction of personal needs out of social consumption funds, whose growth rate as society approaches communism must exceed the rate of increase of individual payment for work. All this helps to create conditions for the transition to distribution according to needs.

When we say "To each according to his needs", we imply that different people have different needs. Similarly, when we say "From each according to his abilities", we imply that people's abilities may vary.

What is meant by inequality of abilities? How is it expressed and on what does it depend?

Abilities manifest themselves in activity and they can be judged only by their results.

One view of abilities is that they are a gift of nature. This cannot be right, however, because it ignores the role of the social environment and regards man merely as a biological, natural being and not a social being. But the opposite view, which completely denies the role of nature, cannot be regarded as correct either, because it leaves unexplained the fact that given the same conditions of life and education individuals may greatly differ in their abilities.

Natural gifts are only conditions for the development of abilities; their actual development takes place in the course of the life of the individual under the influence of training, education and self-education, in the course of his work and social activity. The character of an individual's abilities is also influenced by the general conditions of social life and the immediate social environment (family, neighbours, work-mates, acquaintances, etc.), that is, the micro-environment, which also includes various accidental factors that sometimes escape notice.

What then are the conditions of the social environment that encourage the formation and development of abilities?

To this question Marx and Engels gave the following answer: "Only within the community has each individual the means of cultivating his gifts in all directions; hence personal freedom becomes possible only within the community."[1] The term "community" here implies not a *small*, local group, but rather society as a whole, as a collective unity, that is, socialist or communist society, because only such a society does away with the social (class and group) barriers, which prevent the free development of the broad masses of the people. The increasingly close ties between production and science, the development of various forms of initiative, the tremendous growth of education and opportunities for the masses to appreciate all the values of culture—all these things make possible the diverse manifestation and perfection of the individual's energies and abilities.

Man's activity, in the process of which his abilities are formed and developed, is inconceivable without intercourse with other people. Such intercourse may take two forms: direct, as collective, joint action, or indirect, i.e., communication established through language and the mass media among people separated by space or time (continuity of culture and traditions).

The latter form of intercourse is undoubtedly of tremendous importance in developing people's abilities, their creative activity. At the same time with the development of material and intellectual culture there is also an increasing demand for the cooperation of labour, for the development of forms of direct collective activity. This trend is making headway at the present time, particularly in various fields of science.

When speaking of collective forms of work we must not confuse the concept "individual form of work" with that of "individuality". The growth of collective forms of work does restrict its individual forms, but does not eliminate them altogether; as for individuality, far from being restricted, it is enriched in collective work.

In the collective even the weaker individual is strong, not only because the collective functions on the principle of mutual assistance, but also because work in the collective helps the individual to activate his potential, to stimulate his energies and abilities. Noting this aspect, Marx observes that mere social contact begets in most industries competition and a stimulation of the animal spirits that heighten the efficiency of each individual workman.[2]

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology*, Vol. 5, p. 78.
[2] See K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 308.

This efficiency is doubled and trebled in team work based on an awareness of the common interests and goals that are vital to the whole collective. The development of abilities also presupposes the *will* to achieve certain goals. Like other abilities, will-power is also not merely a gift of nature; it is born and tempered in activity. No matter how significant personal incentives in the form of personal material interest or the mental satisfaction derived from social approval, it is the spirit of solidarity and mutual dedication developed in the course of collective work that fosters will-power and thus multiplies the energy and abilities of the individual.

The degree of coordination of the collective effort depends to a great extent on adherence to principle, which calls both for a sense of responsibility and for comradely criticism, free of prejudice, personal sympathy or antipathy. The team spirit also depends on the encouragement of useful initiative and correct distribution of functions. By its very nature a collective is an arena for the expression and development of individual energies and abilities, for individual freedom. The socialist way of life presupposes an atmosphere of genuine collectivism and comradeliness, solidarity, friendship of all the country's nations and peoples, and the maintenance of sound moral standards that make for strong and stable personalities.

The Marxist idea of the collective and collective spirit as the source of the development of individuality is fiercely attacked by the opponents of communism, and also by people who, without any particular hostility towards communism, are in some way or other infected with the psychology and ideology of individualism. These attacks usually converge over the problem of *freedom*—the question of what freedom is and what its criteria are. Marxism demands a concretely historical approach to definition of freedom. It is opposed by an abstract interpretation of freedom, which makes the very concept of freedom meaningless. Lenin qualified this manipulation of the abstract concept of freedom as hypocrisy. Whichever the freedom in question—economic, political, legal, moral—he demanded a concrete, historical approach to its interpretation.

The collective spirit is not a negation of freedom. On the contrary, only in society, in the collective, is personal freedom possible. But the collective makes definite demands on the individual, charging him with *responsibility* for the satisfaction of the interests of the community. Without this there can be no collective struggle for general class aims, or life together in socialist society. It is the responsible approach of every citizen to his duties, to the people's interests, that creates the only reliable basis for the

fullest possible realisation of the principles of socialist democracy and complete freedom of the individual.

Falsification of the idea of *humanism* is also connected with the manipulation of the idea of abstract freedom that is characteristic of bourgeois ideology and propaganda. The abstract interpretation of humanism is just as misleading as the concept of absolute freedom. Bourgeois humanism proclaimed its existence in the period when feudalism was being superseded by capitalism. It was a protest against oppression by the feudal aristocracy, the church and the monarchy. Its answer to Catholicism was Protestantism, to absolutism—liberalism, and to hierarchical privileges of the feudal estates—free economic competition. But at the heart of this humanism lay the desire to ensure freedom of private enterprise. In other words, its concern was above all for man as the owner of property. So even when bourgeois humanism was playing a progressive role, it remained restricted, inasmuch as it failed to include the idea of the emancipation of labour.

Socialist humanism, called into being by the appearance of the proletariat on the historical scene and the creation of its scientific ideology, is a qualitatively new stage in the development of humanist ideas. *This is a humanism which regards the free development of each as the condition for the free development of all.* It appeals not to the élite of society, but to the whole people, because it sees the all-round perfecting of man, his energies and abilities, as the highest goal. Under socialism increasingly favourable conditions for the achievement of this aim are created as production, culture and living standards improve. The socialist state guarantees all citizens the broadest political and social-economic rights, rights that the working people do not have in the capitalist countries.

The concrete, historical approach to the problem of freedom and humanism upheld by Marxism-Leninism, while proceeding mainly from class criteria, does not imply acknowledgement of the idea that each class, by establishing its own criterion, is right from its own point of view. Lenin constantly emphasised the fact that, whereas the bourgeoisie is compelled to disguise its interpretation of freedom with misleading phrases, the proletariat openly proclaims its demands for freedom and has every moral right to do so because it is fighting for the creation of a society based on the principles of genuine humanism and all-round freedom of the individual.

The movement of socialist society towards social homogeneity is reflected in ideology and psychology in the form of a growth of collectivist consciousness and consolidation of opinions, views and evaluations. This does not imply a tendency towards depersonalisation and elimination of individuality. On the contrary, the building

of communism, since it is accompanied by man's spiritual growth, leads to an enrichment of individuality. The richer a man is spiritually, the wider his horizons and the more varied his knowledge, the more independent he is in his thinking and judgements. Growing ideological unity is thus achieved not on the basis of a levelling down of individual minds but by taking into consideration all the diversity of experience and knowledge of the builders of communism. This in turn calls for the improvement and perfecting of the system of social administration and organisation of the life of every collective.

The revisionists denigrate the ideas of authority and leadership and want to do away with organisation and proclaim spontaneity in the name of "free" personal initiative. Such views are essentially no different from the philosophy of bourgeois individualism with its slogan of *laissez faire, laissez passer* ("do as you please"), which was brought into being by the bourgeois mode of production with its basic principles of anarchy and market competition. It would be pointless to apply it to the communist mode of production, based on the planning of the economic and cultural life of society, comradely cooperation and mutual assistance.

Socialism is a highly organised society. Such a society can exist and develop only on the basis of democratic centralism, which excludes, on the one hand, bureaucratic authoritarianism and, on the other, bourgeois individualism.

Thus, the interrelationship of society and the individual, while based on the relationship of their interests, alters historically depending on changes in the material needs of society and changes in the social structure.

When society is based on private ownership of the means of production, it is split into antagonistic classes with mutually exclusive interests. In such social conditions the general framework of the individual's personal life is predetermined by his class affiliation, regardless of his individual gifts. Under capitalism, for example, the social status of the individual is determined by the amount of capital he possesses rather than by his abilities.

Abolition of private ownership of the means of production transforms society into a collective unity of all the social groups of which it is composed. The elimination of class and group inequality, class and group privileges, makes a person's future more and more dependent on his individual qualities, on his attitude to work. Socialist society develops on the basis of the growing coordination of social, group and personal interests, and as it moves on towards communism it opens up for the individual ever wider possibilities of all-round development and application of his natural and acquired abilities, energies and talents.

Chapter XIX

THE ROLE OF THE MASSES AND THE INDIVIDUAL IN HISTORY

The masses and the individual form the two inseparably connected poles of the historical process. History is made up of the actions of large masses of people which, taken together, comprise society. History is the result of the work of succeeding generations, and millions upon millions of people with their own aspirations, hopes and efforts take part in it. But history is not an impersonal process; it is made not only by the masses but also by individuals, and particularly the outstanding personalities who place the imprint of their individuality on historical events. For this reason if we are to know world history, the history of the peoples, we must, on the one hand, analyse the forces that awaken large masses of people, whole nations, to action and, on the other, assess the character and degree of influence exerted on this process by the historical figures who command events.

1. Idealist Views of the Role of the People and the Individual in History

The study of world history presents us with a complex and contradictory picture of historical events: class battles, revolutions and counter-revolutions, wars of liberation and aggression, the formation of powerful states and their collapse, the rise, flowering and decline and sometimes even the destruction of whole peoples. Historical science, the memory of mankind, has preserved the names of historical figures, kings, emperors and warlords, with whom the outstanding historical events of the past were connected. Feudal historians as well as many bourgeois historians and students of the philosophy of history concluded from this that these eminent historical personalities were the makers of history, its chief participants.

This view enjoyed a long supremacy. It was shared by many materialists as well as idealists. Its clearest exposition is to be found in the work of the 19th-century historian Thomas Carlyle, who wrote in his book *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History*: "...Universal History, the history of what man has accom-

plished in this world, is at bottom the History of the Great Men who have worked here." Carlyle regarded the deeds of these great men as "the soul of the whole world's history".[1]

The Russian Narodniks of the 1870s and 1880s—Pyotr Lavrov, Nikolai Mikhailovsky and others—defended, although for different reasons, what was essentially the same subjectivist point of view. Society's conditions of life, wrote Mikhailovsky in his book *Heroes and the Mob*, condemn the masses to spiritual poverty, deprive them of the ability to rise above material interests, i.e., rob them of historical initiative. The Narodniks sympathised with the people in their troubles but would not believe in their ability to create history. For them the mass of the people was, as Plekhanov put it, no more than an infinite number of zeros; these zeros could become a positive quantity only when led by a critically thinking unity, a hero.

The subjective-idealist view of the people was also used by some ideologists to draw extremely reactionary conclusions. The position of the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche was typical in this respect. He described the people as "a shapeless material from which something is made, the rock that awaits the sculptor's chisel".[2] Nietzsche's imagination conjured up the idea of the superman, the hero who stood "beyond good and evil", who could spurn the morality of the majority. Lust for power was the chief principle and motivation of such an individual. For the sake of power any means would do and any action was justified. Some of Nietzsche's individualistic theories were later borrowed by the ideologists of nazism, and during the Second World War, which it unleashed, nazism showed in practice just what was implicit in the "philosophy of the superman", the worship of the "strong personality", of the "Führer".

Subjectivist notions of the historical process are extremely persistent. Even today bourgeois sociologists, historians and politicians seek the key to the events of modern times in the will of certain statesmen. The American author C.L.Sulzberger in his book *A Long Row of Candles* writes: "The greatest lesson I have learned is that, despite Marxist worship of events and trends, it is men who influence history by their will.... The giant... can make history, but the pretender is overwhelmed by it."[3]

[1] Thomas Carlyle, *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History*, Chapman and Hall, London, 1901, pp. 1-2.

[2] F. Neitzsche, *Ecce Homo*, Werke in zwei Banden, Band II, Carl Hanser Verlag, München, 1976, S. 464.

[3] C. L. Sulzberger, *A Long Row of Candles, Memoirs and Diaries (1934-1954)*, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1969, p. XV.

The subjective-idealist view of the role of the individual in history, which ignores the role of the masses, was criticised even before Marx by a number of bourgeois historians. Study of the history of the English and French relolutions led the French historians of the Restoration (Thierry, Guizot, Mignet, and others) to conclusions diametrically opposed to the previously dominant view held by the French Enlighteners on the role of the individual in history. The latter saw in the conscious activity of outstanding personalities the main driving force of historical events. The French historians, however, transferred the centre of gravity to the activity of the masses, particularly their spontaneous activity. One of the exponents of this school of thought, Adolphe Monod wrote: "One is only too accustomed, in history, to interesting oneself only in brilliant, resounding and ephemeral manifestations of human activity, great events and great men, instead of insisting on the great and slow movements of economic and social institutions and conditions, which constitute the truly interesting and permanent part of human evolution—that part which can be analysed with some certitude, and, in certain measures, reduced to laws. Truly important events and individuals are such, above all, as signs and symbols of various moments of this evolution; but most of the facts that are called historical have the same relation to actual history as the waves, which rise to the surface of the sea, are momentarily tinged by all the colours of daylight, and break on the sandy shore, leaving no trace behind them, have to the deep and constant motion of the tides."[1]

This was undoubtedly a more profound view of the movement of history. But the role of outstanding personalities cannot be described merely as the symbols or signs of historical events. Such an oversimplification may lead to a fatalistic notion of history as a preordained process which nothing can change.

This was what ultimately happened to Hegel, whose views on the role of the individual in history are an important stage in the development of philosophic-historical thought. According to Hegel, the vehicle of historical necessity is the world spirit or mind, which controls the world; the cunning of the world spirit, which guides the movement of history, lies in the fact that it uses the interests, passions and aspirations of men, including great men, as a means to its ends—the realisation of progress in the consciousness of freedom.

[1] Quoted from: G. V. Plekhanov, "On the Question of the Individual's Role in History", in *Selected Philosophical Works* in five volumes, Vol. II, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1976, p. 296.

But despite this idealist foundation there was something more significant and rational this doctrine of Hegel's. Hegel tried to provide a dialectical solution to the problem of the relationship between freedom and necessity and in so doing he made a number of profound statements concerning the role of great men in history.

Hegel said that the only great men, the individuals of historic importance, were those in whose aims and actions there is universality, necessity. "It is they who should be called *heroes*, inasmuch as they drew their aims and their vocation not simply from the calm, regular course of things sanctified by the existing system, but from a source whose content was hidden and had not as yet developed to the point of present being, from the inner spirit which was still below ground and was battering at the external world, as at an enclosing shell which it must break...".[1]

Such figures were thinking people who understood what was necessary and timely, what was true for their own age. According to Hegel, however, both historical personalities and whole peoples are merely the instruments of the world spirit, which secretly controls them and through them works for its own ends. His philosophic-historical views are therefore permeated with the spirit of fatalism and mysticism.

Many contemporary bourgeois sociologists oppose to the Marxist theory of the role of the masses, of classes and the individual in social life, the so-called *theory of the élite*. They see in the people only a destructive, negative force, a mass that does not think but must obey authority. Only the élite, consisting of the most gifted part of a people, nation or race can be, according to them, the vehicle of the creative, positive principle.

The American sociologist Ely Chinoy insists that "in every society some men are identified as superior and others as inferior.... Everywhere some rule and others obey, although the latter may possess varying degrees of influence or control over the rulers.These contrasts—between higher and lower, rich and poor, powerful and powerless—constitute the substance of social stratification."[2] Chinoy regards this division of society into higher and lower, rulers and ruled as an eternal law of social existence, its source being the difference in men's natural abilities.

The scientific and technological revolution has modified the theory of the élite into the theory of the *technocratic élite*. One of the authors of this theory, the American sociologist James Burnham,

[1] Hegel, *Sämtliche Werke*, Bd. 11, S. 60.

[2] Ely Chinoy, *Society. An Introduction to Sociology*, Random House, New York, 1961, p. 131.

author of the much discussed book *The Managerial Revolution*, tried to prove that the working class is incapable of administering society. In his view the current scientific and technological revolution transfers power to scientists and technologists, particularly those involved in managing enterprises, concerns, corporations and banks. The theory of the technocratic élite has gained considerable ground in contemporary capitalist society. Its purpose is to disguise the actual domination of this society by the capitalist monopolies. The financial oligarchy is the real ruler of the capitalist world. And it is a fact that cannot be understood from the positions of the subjective-idealist or objective-idealist approach to history.

2. The Scientific View of the Role of the Masses in History

Even in the first major works of Marx and Engels, *The Holy Family, or the Critique of Critical Criticism*, and *The German Ideology*, the idealist view of the role of the individual in history was sharply criticised. "On the one side is the Mass, as the passive, spiritless, unhistorical, *material* element of history. On the other is *the* Spirit, *Criticism*, Herr Bruno and Co. as the active element from which all *historical* action proceeds. The act of transforming society is reduced to the *cerebral activity* of Critical Criticism."[1] This is how Marx in *The Holy Family* sarcastically presents the subjective-idealist view of the Young Hegelians on history, contrasting it with his own, materialist belief in the determining role of the people, the revolutionary classes in the historical process.

The idealist view of history was not the idle invention of sociologists and historians. It had its social and epistemological roots. In conditions of economic, political and spiritual oppression the masses are kept out of any decisive participation in politics. Only at the turning points in history do they rise up and take an active independent part in history, a part that ultimately decides the outcome of events. But in the ordinary, so-called peaceful periods it is the ruling, exploiting classes and their political representatives who have controlled "high politics". This is what bourgeois sociology and historiography reflect in their own way, while for the most part ignoring the deep-going *everyday activity* of the masses, which does not immediately catch the eye.

But this activity forms the deep undercurrent of the complex and contradictory historical process, and it was this undercurrent

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *The Holy Family*, Vol. 4, p. 86.

and decisive driving force of history that had to be discovered behind the kaleidoscopic scene of passing historical events.

The people is the chief creator, the real subject of history—this is the fundamental proposition of historical materialism. Now let us consider the concept of the people. This concept is used both in the broad sense, coinciding with the concept of the population or the nation, and in the narrower sense, meaning the masses, the makers of history.

The concept of the masses or the mass of the people is a category that changes and develops historically. It must be considered in relation to the given social-economic formations, its specific social structure, and also in relation to the specific course of historical development of the given society and the given country. In class society the masses may include various social classes. But although the class composition of the masses may change, historically this concept always (1) has as its core the mass of the working people who produce material goods, (2) embraces the overwhelming majority of the population opposed to the anti-popular upper crust of society, the reactionary classes, and (3) includes all social strata who promote social progress (hence in certain historical circumstances the concept "masses" or "people" may include certain non-working classes, for example, the national bourgeoisie, inasmuch as it participates in the progressive movement of society).

The idea of the determining role of the masses in history is already implied in the all-important proposition of historical materialism, according to which the production of material goods is the life-giving basis of society, and the development of the productive forces ultimately determines all social processes. We have already seen that the productive forces of society are not merely the instruments and means of labour but above all people, the working people, the producers of material goods. The mass of the working people forms a creative productive force of the greatest importance.[1] The imperceptible, often hidden development of the

[1] Tolstoy made his own inimitable comment on this fact when reading Solovyov's *History of Russia:* "When you read of how they plundered, ruled, conquered and destroyed (and history tells us of nothing else), you involuntarily ask yourself the question: what did they plunder and destroy? And from this question the mind passes to another: who produced that which was destroyed? How and by whom were all these people fed? Who made the brocade, the cloth, the robes, the damasks in which the tsars and boyars swaggered? Who trapped the black foxes and sables that were presented to the ambassadors? Who mined the gold and iron, who bred the horses, oxen and sheep, who built the houses, the palaces, the churches, who delivered all these goods?" (L. N. Tolstoy, *Complete Works,* Vol. 48, Moscow, 1952, p. 124, in Russian.)

productive forces of society was the underlying basis of the progressive historical movement of mankind; it paved the way for revolutions first in the mode of production, and then in the whole social system.

The experience of the socialist revolutions and the building of socialism has shown in practice the bankruptcy of the bourgeois theories that the masses can play only a negative, destructive role in history. It stands to reason, of course, that the masses led by the working class and its party, when making a socialist revolution, must first destroy the bourgeois state machine, the means of oppression used against the people and abolish social relations based on exploitation. But this process is only the necessary condition for saving from destruction the productive forces, the material and spiritual values created by the people's labour. The main feature of socialist revolutions is not destructive but creative activity, the construction of the new, unprecedented forms of the socialist state, the organisation of social relations that do away with human exploitation and give the man of toil the status of a free workman.

In past epochs the functions of administration in the economy, in the state, in ideological life were the monopoly of the exploiting classes. In socialist society the people for the first time take their fate into their own hands and become masters of economic, political and spiritual life. For the first time in history there is the widest scope for all kinds and forms of creative activity on the part of the people.

When only small groups of aristocrats, landowners or the upper strata of the bourgeoisie occupied the foreground of history and the broad mass of people was condemned to what Lenin called "historical hibernation", society moved ahead very slowly indeed. And conversely, when the broad masses awoke, as they did at the crucial moments, history quickened its pace. This is particularly characteristic of the present age with its dynamism and profound revolutionary transformations in all spheres of life.

World history testifies to the fact that the greater the masses of the people that come into motion, the more profound are the social and political transformations in society. And conversely, as the scale and depth of historical action increase, so do the numbers of people taking part in it. This is one of the most important laws of world history.

The determining role of the masses in the sphere of the material and political life of society is indisputable. But is not the ever widening sphere of spiritual, intellectual life an exception to this rule?

No one can deny, of course, the role of men of genius in the field of philosophy, science, literature and art. What would philosophy

and science have been without Democritus and Aristotle, Pythagoras and Archimedes, Copernicus and Galileo, Newton and Einstein, Darwin, Timiryazev and Pavlov? What would world art have been without Praxiteles, Phidias, Rafael, Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, Titian, Repin, Surikov, without Homer, Dante, Shakespeare and Goethe, Byron, Pushkin, Balzac, Gogol, Tolstoy, without Bach, Beethoven, Verdi, Chopin, Glinka and Tchaikovsky? Mankind is indebted to them for immortal masterpieces of world culture.

But all the great artists had close ties with the people and with its art; art divorced from the people would be lifeless and insipid. The people provides the scientist, the poet, the writer with the treasury of language which it has evolved in the course of centuries. The people creates fairy-tales, legends and songs. And all great artists have always nourished their art from this inexhaustible store of folk art.

We know how great the part played by eminent scientists has been in the development of science. Nevertheless there is a certain pattern in scientific discoveries; the whole preceding development of science and technology paves the way for them. A German historian rightly observed: "Would Pythagoras' theorem have remained unknown if Pythagoras and his school had never existed? Would we never have discovered the law of gravity without Newton? Would we have still been travelling in stage-coaches if Stevenson had not invented the locomotive?"[1] The fate of science, of all culture is not determined by the accident of the birth of one or another genius. The development of science and art is a law-governed process.

In the final analysis it is the people that decide the fate of history. But the role of the masses cannot be considered in the abstract, in isolation from classes and parties, or from the leaders who guide them. As history shows, the role of the masses depends largely on what political and ideological leadership they have at a given period of history, in a given country. The example of Germany in the period of nazi domination demonstrates how in certain critical situations the imperialist bourgeoisie with all the means of crushing and deceiving the masses at its disposal can incite them to actions that contradict their fundamental interests and social progress.

So, in order to arrive at a correct assessment of the historical role of the masses we must clarify the actual role of organisations and parties, the role of outstanding personalities in history.

[1] Quoted from: K. Kautsky, *The Materialistic Understanding of History*, Vol. II, Moscow-Leningrad, 1931, p. 704 (in Russian).

3. The Role of the Individual in History

The fundamental direction of social development, for example the transition from feudalism to capitalism or the replacement of capitalist by socialist society, is determined by objective laws that do not depend on the will and consciousness of people. even the most outstanding. When considering the general causes of historical development, we may temporarily put the role of the individual into the abstract. The same may be said of the effects of particular causes and circumstances (for example, the influence on the historical process in this or that country of the level of its development and the particular features of the situation), which do not depend on separate individuals either. But what we should not do is to ignore the role of the individual in explaining specific historic events, which depend not only on general and particular but also on individual causes. Thus, the course of revolution in a particular country, and also the course and outcome of wars between states and other concrete historical events depend not only on the main, determining causes, but also on such factors as the wisdom and foresight or, conversely, incompetence and shortsightedness of the leaders who presided over these events. Unless we take into account these factors, these historical accidents of every kind, the living, concrete history acquires a fatalistic and mystical character.

The Marxist position on the question of the role of the individual in history was set forth in the clearest of formulas by Lenin: "Marxism differs from all other socialist theories in the remarkable way it combines complete scientific sobriety in the analysis of the objective state of affairs and the objective course of evolution with the most emphatic recognition of the importance of the revolutionary energy, revolutionary creative genius and revolutionary initiative of the masses—and also, of course, of individuals, groups, organisations, and parties that are able to discover and achieve contact with one or another class."[1]

History is made by man and only by man. Consideration of the objective conditions that determine men's actions is the only way of scientifically explaining the role of both classes and parties and of historical figures in social life. The point that we have to decide is under what conditions a given individual is assured of success in the achievement of his aims and under what conditions even outstanding people must inevitably suffer failure.

Historical conditions ultimately determine the scope of the

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Against Boycott. Notes of a Social-Democratic Publicist*, Vol. 13, p. 36.

individual's activity. Not even the most outstanding personalities have ever escaped this framework. For example, if the necessary material prerequisites or conditions for a new social-economic formation have not yet matured in the framework of the old society, no historical figure can call that formation into being. No one, no individual can make history according to his will or cause social development to flow backwards, for example, from capitalism to feudalism or to the slave-owning system. Hitler's phrenetic attempt to impose on Europe something in the nature of a slave system under the aegis of the "Aryan race" ended in shameful disaster, just as similar attempts of other reactionary leaders had done before him.

Great men, like the great social ideas which they create and express, usually arise in critical periods of world history or the history of a particular nation. It is not great men who create and call into being great epochs but, on the contrary, the latter provide the favourable soil, the conditions in which the talents, genius and natural gifts of a certain personality can mature, display themselves and come to fruition.

Oliver Cromwell was the son and representative of the English bourgeois revolution; his gifts as a statesman and general were able to evolve thanks to this revolution. Had it not been for the great French bourgeois revolution, neither France nor the world would ever have known Mirabeau, Saint-Just, Robespierre or Napoleon and his marshals, most of whom were men of simple origin.

It is historical conditions and historical needs that produce outstanding leaders. "That such and such a man and precisely that man arises at a particular time in a particular country is, of course, pure chance. But if one eliminates him there is a demand for a substitute, and this substitute will be found, good or bad, but in the long run he will be found. That Napoleon; just that particular Corsican, should have been the military dictator whom the French Republic, exhausted by its own warfare, had rendered necessary, was chance; but that, if a Napoleon had been lacking, another would have filled the place, is proved by the fact that a man was always found as soon as he became necessary: Caesar, Augustus, Cromwell, etc."[1]

It cannot be denied, of course, that the outstanding man leaves his mark on the events which he commands. It is possible that if Napoleon had been replaced by another general, France would not have enjoyed such military successes and the actual course of

[1] F. Engels to W. Borgius in Breslau. London, January 25, 1894, in: K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 442.

events that led first to the rise and then to the fall of Napoleon would have been different. But the general direction of France's economic, social and political development in the 19th century could not have altered.

Another objection is sometimes raised to the proposition that great men appear in response to social needs. It is argued that there were epochs when great men, heroes, proclaimers of new and splendid ideals were needed but failed to appear. So, such epochs remained periods of stagnation, neglect and inertia. The Middle Ages are usually offered as an example.

But the Middle Ages were an epoch of relative stagnation not because there were at this time no great men, no outstanding political figures; individuals of great natural gifts were born in this epoch also but time and circumstances gave no encouragement to their talents. The domination of the church, of the Inquisition, generated an atmosphere and moral climate when free thought never appeared, was snuffed out, or withdrew to a monastery cell. Only on his death bed, when his days were numbered, was the great Copernicus able to hurl a challenge at the old, dogmatic views concerning the position of the Earth in the solar system.

Nevertheless, even in medieval times slow, hidden processes were at work that in the end led to the Age of the Renaissance and to the emergence of brilliant galaxies of great philosophers, scientists, writers and artists.

This bears out the general law that *the emergence of great men is the expression of the needs and aims of their epoch*. Of course, the measure and depth of their ability to express and promote these aims depend on their personal qualities and gifts. The emergence of eminent figures is not an automatic process, for here accident is interwoven with necessity.

It may be said quite definitely, however, that the greatness of the historic figure depends in the long run on the scale of the tasks with which the epoch confronts him. It is no accident, therefore, that the epoch of socialist revolution, signifying the deepest of all transformations in history, produces historic leaders and thinkers of colossal proportions. This is an epoch when new millions of people awaken and join in the making of history and when the leadership of these masses demands truly titanic revolutionary thought and action.

4. The Historic Role of the Leaders of the Working Class and Socialist Revolution

Every class produces its heroes. Marx and Engels were the ideologists of a new class—the revolutionary proletariat; they were

founders of the new, proletarian party—the League of Communists, the organisers of the First International, a world-wide association of working men. Marx made great scientific discoveries that are of world historic significance.

The creation of the dialectical-materialist philosophy, the theory of surplus value, the discovery of the proletariat as the new revolutionary class, the scientific substantiation of its historic mission—any one of these great discoveries would have been enough to perpetuate the memory of Marx for centuries to come. Sometimes people ask: "Could scientific socialism have appeared without Marx?" The history of human thought led up naturally to the creation of scientific socialism. This was noted by Engels: "While Marx discovered the materialist conception of history, Thierry, Mignet, Guizot, and all the English historians up to 1850 are evidence that it was being striven for, and the discovery of the same conception by Morgan proves that the time was ripe for it and that it simply *had* to be discovered."[1] Nevertheless, in speaking of the historical law-governed nature of Marxism, Engels subtracted nothing from the genius of its creator: "Marx stood higher, saw further. and took a wider and quicker view than all the rest of us .... Without him the theory would not be by far what it is today. It therefore rightly bears his name."[2]

The example of the historic role played by Marx indicates not only what a genius can do but also what even the greatest individual cannot do if the existing conditions set limits to his activity. No matter how great the revolutionary activity of Marx and Engels, the socialist revolution did not grow to full maturity in their epoch. Certain objective conditions were lacking. And the working class itself was not yet ready to carry out its historic mission. So, although Marx and Engels discovered the most general laws of socialist revolution and its driving forces, the practical realisation of these discoveries remained the task of the future and the cause of age that was yet to come.

The historical destiny of Marx's teaching might have taken a different course but for the work of Lenin, but for his struggle for revolutionary Marxism against the revisionists and dogmatists. Lenin's appearance of the historical scene as the creator of Leninism, the Marxism of the present epoch, as the founder of the party of Bolsheviks, the leader of the Great October Socialist Revolution and founder of the world's first socialist state exerted a great

[1] Ibid.
[2] F. Engels, "Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy", in: K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works,* Vol. 3, p. 361.

influence on the course of history.

Lenin was the unsurpassed strategist and organiser of proletarian revolution. He possessed a tremendous ability to foresee scientifically the development of events, the possible zigzags and unexpected turns in the course of history, to understand the behaviour of the enemy and the wavering elements, and at the same time to build up with the support of the new type of Marxist party a revolutionary army and to win allies for the proletariat. Lenin believed in the limitless strength of the working class, of the people.

Like Marx, he was hostile to any worship of the individual, to any personality cult, which he regarded as fundamentally contradictory to the whole spirit and essence of their teaching.

The example of Lenin's life and work illustrates the great historical role of the leaders of the proletariat, of the mass of the working people. It is because this role is so great that the bourgeoisie wages a ruthless war on the communist, working-class movement and its leaders. First of all, it seeks to decapitate the movement. One has only to recall the murders of Karl Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg, Ernst Thälmann and others.

A more subtle method is to try to terrorise the movement through the press, radio, television and other propaganda media. There is also the bribery of certain leaders of the working-class movement with offers of highly paid sinecures. And finally, there are flattery and praise for the leaders that in some way or other abandon the principles of revolutionary Marxism, succumb to nationalism or revisionism, and undermine the unity of the international communist movement. Long ago, at the beginning of this century one of the leaders of German Social-Democracy, August Bebel, showed how clearly he had understood the motive behind such tactics. When the German bourgeoisie lavished praises upon him, he exclaimed: "Ah, old Bebel, what foolishness have you committed to deserve the enemy's praise!" Today, as then, the bourgeoisie's attitude towards consistent and steadfast leaders of the working class is that it hates and persecutes them.

The bourgeois propaganda campaign against the socialist countries, and also against the communist and working-class parties and their leaders became particularly intense at the time of the CPSU's criticism of the cult of Stalin's personality. They attempted to present the personality cult as something inherent in the socialist system, something derived from the principles of Leninism and its teaching on the party. But this assertion bears no resemblance to the truth. The cult of personality, a superstitious attitude to outstanding figures, their deification, has occurred at various times, both in the distant past and in the present day. Michel Verret states

in his book *Théorie et politique* that in France over the last 160 years there have been several personality cults connected with the names of Napoleon Bonaparte, Napoleon III, De Gaulle and others. This indicates that the emergence of personality cults at various times in various countries demands a specific historical explanation.

The CPSU, its Central Committee, on their own initiative severely criticised the cult of Stalin's personality as something that contradicted the nature of socialism and the principles of Marxism-Leninism, as a departure from Leninist standards of inner-party life. The scientific explanation of the conditions in which this personality cult grew up was given in the well-known resolution of the Central Committee of the CPSU of June 30, 1956.

As the Central Committee's resolution shows, a personality cult may be provoked both by certain objective circumstances and by subjective factors. The objective circumstances include, for example, the difficulty and complexity of the tasks of overcoming backwardness, the intensity of the class struggle within the country and in the international field, which demand the strictest centralisation of leadership.

The Soviet Union was 50 to 100 years behind the capitalist countries in technological and economic development. This lag had to be overcome in the shortest possible time. With only internal resources to draw upon, a huge country had to be industrialised and electrified, its backward agriculture restored and reorganised on the basis of socialism, and re-equipped with modern machinery. In a country in which before the revolution 72 per cent of the population had been illiterate this meant that there had to be a cultural revolution.

The situation was further complicated by the need to fight trends hostile to Leninism within the party. At that time the opposition in the party, led by Trotsky, maintained that the attempt to build socialism in one country, and a backward one at that, confronted by conservative Europe, was a hopeless task. The right-wing opportunists came out against a rapid rate of industrialisation, against the struggle with the kulaks and in favour of the spontaneous development of agriculture. What would have happened to the Soviet Union if these theoretical and political platforms had triumphed in the party? This might have meant the destruction of Soviet power and the cause of socialism. The Communist Party had to defeat Trotskyism and right-wing opportunism both theoretically and politically and set scientifically calculated paths and rates of socialist construction. The struggle against the nationalistic deviation and for internationalism was also of great importance.

The cult of Stalin's personality arose against the background of

the successes achieved in the 1930s by the party and the country. These successes were unprecedented: they signified a gigantic leap in the development of the country's productive forces, the liquidation of a huge lag and the establishing of the foundations of socialism in what was historically a very short period of time. In these years Stalin won great prestige in the party and among the people. But at a certain stage this prestige began to grow into worship of his personality. Everything that had been achieved by the activity of the people and the party was wrongly attributed to one man. A great part in this process was undoubtedly played by subjective factors, by the negative traits in Stalin's own character, which Lenin had pointed out at the end of 1922 and the beginning of 1923 in his letter to the Party Congress—rudeness, disloyalty to comrades, intolerance of criticism, and a lack of the modesty that had characterised the founders of Marxism-Leninism.

However, no matter what negative consequences resulted from this personality cult, involving violations of collective leadership, inner-party democracy and Soviet legality, it could not change the character of the socialist system or shake the foundations of socialism. The essential factor in all the great historical transformations that were achieved was the mass, nation-wide heroism, the unprecedented historical creativity of the people, led by the CPSU.

Having overcome the negative consequences of the personality cult, the CPSU provided all conditions for the development of democracy in the party and the country as a whole. The Leninist standards and principles of collective leadership, which made it impossible for excessive power to be concentrated in the hands of individuals or for them to step beyond the control of the party and the people, were re-established. All-round development of criticism and self-criticism at all levels, without respect of persons is also a safeguard against personality cults.

The example of the CPSU shows that only a party, trained on Marxist lines, can find the strength to overcome such a cult and its negative consequences. The experience and lessons of the struggle for socialism in the USSR and in other countries provide proof that the guarantee of victory is loyalty to the principles of Marxism-Leninism and its teaching on the objective laws of revolution and the construction of socialism, to the principles of socialist internationalism. Departure from these principles, belittlement of the role of the party and the significance of the Leninist standards of collective leadership sooner or later lead to grave mistakes and great dangers to the cause of socialism.

The Marxist-Leninist doctrine on the role of the masses and the individual in history teaches Communists to rely in all their

activity on the masses and to lead them forward. It demands skill in giving full encouragement to their initiative and fighting against everything that restricts that initiative. Finally, it makes it incumbent on all leaders, at every level, to arrive at a sober and objective assessment of that role, to avoid boastfulness and conceit and make every effort to acquire the style of work that Lenin bequeathed.

Generalising the experience of the struggle for the masses, the party's experience of leading the masses, Lenin wrote:

"*Keep in touch with the masses.*

"Live *close* to them.

"Know their *moods.*

"Know *everything.*

"Understand the masses.

"Be able to approach them.

"Win their *absolute* trust.

"Leaders must not become isolated from the masses they lead, or the vanguard from the whole army of labour... .

"Do not flatter the masses and do not break away from them."[1]

These laconic lines contain the essential principles of Marxism-Leninism concerning the interrelationship between the masses, classes, the party and its leaders.

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Complete Works,* Fifth Russ. Ed., Vol. 44, pp. 497-98.

Chapter XX

HISTORICAL PROGRESS

The problem of historical progress occupies an important place in the science of society. This problem is the subject of fierce ideological struggle because any elucidation of it implies an evaluation of the present and future of mankind, its short-term and long-term prospects of development. Is mankind moving towards higher forms of social life, towards more enlightened and humane social relations, towards a higher culture and moral consciousness? Or is it sliding towards thermonuclear disaster, towards catastrophic overpopulation, towards the biological degeneration of man, etc.? These arguments, as we see, are about the essence of historical progress. What is this essence, what are the driving forces of progress, the criteria that enable us to distinguish the progressive from the regressive in social development? These are some of the important aspects of the problem.

1. The Essence of Historical Progress

The idea of progress formulated by such advanced bourgeois social thinkers of the 18th century as Turgot, Condorcet and Herder became predominant in the 19th century. This was the time of the rapid rise of capitalism and to many bourgeois historians, sociologists and philosophers the idea of social progress appeared to be almost self-evident.

But the pre-Marxist philosophers and sociologists could not reveal the true essence, the laws and driving forces of historical progress. Proceeding from the positions of idealism, they sought the causes of human development in the spiritual principle, in the human intellect's infinite ability to perfect itself (Turgot and Condorcet) or in spontaneous self-development of the Absolute Spirit (Hegel). Accordingly, they also saw the criterion of progress in phenomena of a spiritual nature, in the level of development of a particular form of social consciousness: science, morality, law, religion, etc. But there was still no explanation of what actually evoked these forms of social consciousness, or what caused their change and development.

Another notable deficiency of many pre-Marxist conceptions of social progress was their non-dialectical view of social life. Social progress was interpreted mainly as a smooth evolutionary development without revolutionary leaps, without regressive movements, as a steady ascent in a straight line. The sociologists Auguste Comte and Herbert Spencer, for instance, virtually ignored the contradictory, antagonistic nature of the social progress of their day and treated the struggle of the oppressed masses against the bourgeois system as a "morbid phenomenon", as an obstacle to the development of civilisation.

Finally, bourgeois thought restricted social progress to the framework of capitalist society. Hence the conclusion was drawn that any attempt to go beyond the bounds of this society would be regressive and, essentially, doomed to failure.

Marxism overcame the weaknesses and deficiencies of the pre-Marxist conceptions of historical progress and discovered its true essence and driving forces. The founders of Marxism refused to consider the problem in the abstract, just as they refused to consider society in general. Marx warned that "the concept of progress is on the whole not to be understood in the usual abstract form".[1] This implies that phenomena which are progressive in one historical epoch (capitalism, for example) may become reactionary in another. The demand for concrete analysis entails finding out the specific features of progress in different social-economic formations.

The history of mankind, despite its contradictions, temporary periods of stagnation and regression, is ultimately an ascent, a movement from the old to the new, from the simple to the complex. As it develops, mankind creates more powerful productive forces, a more effective economy, more perfect forms of political administration, expanding in varying degrees the limits of man's opportunities and freedom.

Thanks to the dialectical-materialist interpretation of social life it was discovered that the driving forces of historical progress were generated by society itself. *The forces that determine social development are at one and the same time the driving forces of historical progress.* The roots of historical progress should be sought first in the sphere of material production, in the economy, that is to say, in the decisive sphere of social life. The struggle of the progressive classes against obsolete production relations, against reactionary social-political systems, was and still remains a powerful, in fact, the decisive force in ascending historical development.

Historical progress is particularly evident in the *replacement of*

[1] K. Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, p. 215.

social-economic formations. All the formations preceding communism have necessarily, one after the other, prepared their own negation. At a certain stage of development a historically restricted type of production relations that had dominated a certain social-economic formation began to hinder the advance of the productive forces and thus condemned itself to destruction. The emergent new formation ensured a more rapid development of the productive forces.

The development of the productive forces has been steadily accelerating. Progress in the development of the productive forces ultimately conditions progress in the sphere of production relations, in social institutions and in the spiritual development of society.

The progressive development of society reveals itself not only in the transition from one social-economic formation to another but also within the bounds of that formation. Does this mean that every social-economic formation goes on ascending throughout its existence? This cannot be said of the formations preceding communism, which at a certain stage in their development lose their former progressiveness and begin to retard the movement of history. This was the case with slave-owning society, feudalism and capitalism, particularly in the imperialist stage of its development.

At every stage in history the defenders of obsolete regimes have opposed historical progress with all the means at their command. But not a single reactionary class has ever been able to stop the ascending development of mankind.

A striking example of the irreversibility of social progress is Cuba, which is standing up valiantly to the world's most powerful capitalist country—the USA. For more than twenty years American imperialism has been trying to wipe socialist Cuba off the map of the continent, but Cuba stands firmer than ever. The policy of non-recognition, economic and political boycott, military provocations and the like have proved a total failure. More than a hundred countries of the world, including most of the countries of the American continent, have established diplomatic relations with Cuba.

The Reagan Administration has made direct threats against Cuba, and is preparing the ground for aggressive actions against her. But the socialist countries, all progressive and peace-loving forces, have raised their voices in defence of Cuba, her independence and sovereignty.

It can thus be seen that the invincibility of social progress in one country is ensured not only by its own efforts, but also by international support.

Not only social relations but also culture and the moral consciousness of the peoples follow an ascending line of development.

The advance of mankind as a whole is both a process of negation of the obsolete and a process of preserving the values (material and spiritual, including moral values) which enable us to master the forces of nature and increase man's power over the spontaneous course of social development. Here we have a dialectical negation—the negation of the old system with all its positive gains retained and multiplied. The historical process thus emerges not as a simple sequence of social-economic formations but as forward movement, because every new formation surpasses its predecessors in productivity of labour, social and political organisation and intellectual culture, in the conditions that the given society provides for man's development.

The opponents of Marxism-Leninism distort the scientific interpretation of the essence and driving forces of social progress. They attribute to Marxism-Leninism the idea that the level of development of the productive forces automatically determines the level of progress in all other spheres of social life, including the sphere of intellectual culture. This assumption contradicts the social practice and principles of Marxist theory. It is well known, for example, that 19th century Russia was far behind a number of European countries in development of the productive forces, but this did not prevent her from producing great thinkers, writers, composers, and artists. The comparatively high level of the productive forces in the conditions of monopoly capitalism, on the other hand, exists side by side with a decline in the moral consciousness of the ruling classes and with such barbarities as fascism, racism, genocide, and imperialist wars.

The development of intellectual culture (and superstructural phenomena in general) cannot be inferred directly from the level of the productive forces without taking into account the production relations, the nature and acuteness of class contradictions and a large number of other factors. It should not be forgotten that superstructural phenomena are relatively independent of the economy, and that at times this independence may be very sharply expressed. Marx noted, for instance, that certain peaks in the development of art "by no means correspond to the general development of society; nor do they therefore to the material substructure, the skeleton as it were of its organisation".[1]

While noting that, as a whole, the subsequent formation is more progressive than its predecessor, Marxism-Leninism warns against oversimplification of this proposition. The new formation does not necessarily surpass the old in all forms of culture. Thus, in some

[1] Ibid.

spheres of intellectual culture (for example, in philosophy) feudal society was inferior to that of the slave society, but there can be no doubt that, as a whole, the transition from slave society to feudal society signified not regress but progress in social development.

While regarding progress as an objective law of historical development, Marxism-Leninism warns against the primitive interpretation of social progress as a straight and steady ascent from the lower to the higher. The victory of the new system does not follow a strict timetable. A combination of circumstances sometimes has led to the temporary defeat of the historically progressive forces and delayed the accomplishment of objectively mature historical tasks. The history of the establishment of capitalism has shown how devious and contradictory this process has been in different countries.

Objecting to oversimplified interpretations of progress, Lenin wrote: "...It is undialectical, unscientific and theoretically wrong to regard the course of world history as smooth and always in a forward direction, without occasional gigantic leaps back."[1] This warning against the interpretation of ascending development as an automatic process, against the ignoring of the part played by historical accidents, has considerable theoretical and practical relevance in the period of the transition from capitalism to socialism.

The process of establishing the socialist system has demonstrated how stubbornly the reactionary forces resort to every possible means, including war, to destroy the new society and reverse the course of history.

Vulgar economic materialism presents the course of history as an impersonal, purely spontaneous process in which people with consciousness and will possess no more weight in the whirlpool of social events than grains of sand in a hurricane. Bourgeois ideologists quite often attribute this conception to Marxism.

In point of fact Marx and Engels rejected the fatalistic interpretation of historical necessity as something external that dominates people and their behaviour. Engels wrote: "History does nothing, it 'possesses *no* immense wealth', it 'wages no battles'. It is man, real living man, that does all that, that possesses and fights; 'history' is not a person apart, using man as a means for *its own* particular aims; history is *nothing but* the activity of man pursuing his aims."[2]

The fatalistic interpretation of progress condemns people to

[1] V. I. Lenin, *The Junius Pamphlet*, Vol. 22, p. 310.
[2] K. Marx and F. Engels, *The Holy Family*, Vol. 4, p. 93.

contemplation and passivity and justifies reliance on spontaneity and letting things drift. The Marxist-Leninist parties, armed with the scientific conception of social development, work out a scientifically based strategy and tactics for the fundamental transformation of the world.

The Marxist conception of social progress is opposed not only to the fatalistic but also to the subjective-idealist, the voluntarist interpretation. The latter derives from denial of the objective laws of history and therefore quite happily now rejects and now recognises progress on the basis of arbitrary appraisals of its essence. In contrast to this view Marxism-Leninism provides the basis for a strictly objective criterion of historical progress.

2. The Criterion of Historical Progress

What is the criterion of progress? By what essential attributes may the progressive phenomena in history be distinguished from the reactionary?

To begin with, let us consider the *many-sidedness* of social progress which is, in fact, a complex of different social processes. Every specific sphere of social life (the productive forces, economy, politics, law, science, morality, art, etc) has its own special criteria of development which cannot be made interchangeable without abandoning the attempt to make a concrete, specific assessment of the given phenomenon.

The question arises, whether under these conditions it is possible to speak of a general criterion of social progress. Many bourgeois philosophers, particularly the advocates of the theory of factors, who deny the unitary basis of the social process and recognise only the mechanical interaction of equal social factors, answer this question in the negative.

Marxism-Leninism takes the opposite stand. What we call a social-economic formation is an integral, living social organism, a definite social system with its own special structure, laws of development and functioning. If we are dealing not with a totality of separate parts but with their dialectical unity, their integrity, we must obviously have a general criterion for comparing the entities and discovering whether they are progressive or regressive.

Inasmuch as economic relations constitute the foundation of any social-economic formation and ultimately condition all aspects of social life, the general criterion of progress is to be sought, above all, in the sphere of *economic relations,* in *the sphere of production.*

In his work, *The Agrarian Programme of Social-Democracy in the First Russian Revolution, 1905-1907,* Lenin defines the *productive forces* as "the highest criterion of social progress."[1] This definition arises from the fact that in the unity of the productive forces and the relations of production the former constitute the content of the mode of production, its most dynamic element, and express the factor of continuity in the development of production and of the whole social-historical process. Moreover, the level and character of development of the productive forces can be clearly defined and accurately measured.

When we compare the primitive communal system, slave-owning society, feudalism, and the capitalist system with one another, the degree of historical progressiveness of these social-economic formations is characterised primarily by the extent to which they ensure the development of the productive forces.

The superiority of the communist formation over capitalism lies in its revealing the possibility of more planned, rapid and harmonious development of the productive forces. The high level of development of the productive forces and productivity of labour will make possible the creation of an abundance of material and spiritual goods under communism, and their distribution according to people's needs.

In appraising the progressiveness or regressiveness of a social system, however, it is not enough to refer to the level, character and rate of development of the productive forces, taken by themselves, without considering the social consequences of their development, without considering the interests of the working people, the human factor. It is no accident that many bourgeois sociologists today are quite ready to divorce the productive forces from relations of production which leads them to arbitrary constructions and erroneous appraisals. The American sociologist and economist Walt W. Rostow, for instance, prefers to treat the productive forces, particularly technical equipment, quite separately from the production relations, in classifying the stages of social development.

But if one considers only the level of development of the productive forces, taken in isolation from the relations of production, from the social structure, from the actual position of the producers themselves, American capitalism may appear to be almost a progressive force. In reality, the high level of development of the productive forces in the United States is geared to an outmoded, class-divided social-political system. Not a single new social-economic formation can immediately, in the first stage of its development,

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works,* Vol. 13, p. 243.

display all its advantages over the old formation. It takes time for the new social system to realise its full potenital. But even the first phase of communism is superior to capitalism in the type of its production relations because it ensures a higher and more stable rate of development of the productive forces. Socialism has opened up far greater opportunities than capitalism for development of the working man—the most vital of all productive forces and the highest of all values. The character of the socialist relations of production—relations of cooperation and mutual assistance, relations based on public ownership—creates all the objective conditions that will in time make socialist production superior to capitalist production in every respect.

The criterion of progress proposed by Marxism is strictly scientific and objective and rules out any attempt to present as the fundemantal measure of progress a factor that is itself determined by other, more fundamental elementary phenomena.

It is sometimes suggested that this criterion is purely economic in character and divorced from man, from his place and status in society. On these grounds we are offered various values of abstract humanism, moral perfection, etc., as the criterion of progress. But the fact of the matter is that man, his present and future, his well-being and freedom are the focal points both of Marxist science and the socialist system. The activity of the CPSU is wholly dedicated to this cause.

In being oriented by the productive forces, the character and conditions of their development, Marxism reveals the bedrock of human existence, for this is where lie hidden the forces that ultimately determine people's actual position, their standard of life, culture, the degree to which their freedom is realised, the possibilities of their intellectual and moral development and perfection. A high level of productive forces creates the prerequisites of a situation in which the development of some people and classes need not take place at the expense of others, in which the development of production fully coincides with the demands for all-round human development. This historical aim is achieved by socialism, which overcomes the antagonistic character of social progress.

3. Antagonistic Character of Social Progress in Societies with Exploiting Classes

In societies based on private property and exploitation social progress must inevitably be bought at the cost of subjugating the majority of the population, the working people, and stifling

their individuality.

The very development of class-divided societies results from the intense struggle between hostile social classes. The subjugation of huge masses of slaves was the historically inevitable condition of existence of ancient Greece and Rome, and of their culture. The insuperable contradiction between progress and the conditions of life of the working classes continued to exist both under feudalism and under capitalism. With bourgeois society in mind, Marx wrote: "At the same pace that mankind masters nature, man seems to become enslaved to other men or to his own infamy. Even the pure light of science seems unable to shine but on the dark background of ignorance. All our invention and progress seem to result in endowing material forces with intellectual life, and in stultifying human life into a material force."[1]

Considerable changes have taken place, of course, since the time of Marx. The tendency towards absolute impoverishment of the working class in some highly developed capitalist countries has been arrested thanks to the growing organisation and opposition of the oppressed masses. Under the pressure of the organised struggle of the working class, with the world socialist system in existence, the monopolies have been compelled to make partial concessions in order to defend their fundamental interests, their class privileges. Modern technology and equipment have demanded a certain level of education for the workers.

Yet, all these changes do not affect the essence of capitalism and consequently do not remove the contradictory nature of progress in the context of bourgeois society, progress at the expense of the human personality. No one can deny that millions of people in the developed capitalist countries are alienated from the highest attainments of human culture. The assembly line under capitalism stultifies people, the monotony of the work processes eats away their intellect. In capitalist countries the scientific and technological revolution is accompanied by an increase in mental disease, by loss of interest in life and even the will to live, and by a steep rise in the number of suicides.

Marx wrote that the bourgeoisie achieved progress by forcing individuals and even whole peoples to travel an arduous path of blood and filth, poverty and humiliation. This judgement has been reaffirmed in the age of imperialism. Capitalism reaches the peak of its development in the sphere of production and at the same time lays bare its hostility to man, to his freedom, to democracy

[1] K. Marx, *Speech on the Anniversary of "The People's Paper" delivered in London, April 14, 1856*, Vol. 14, pp. 655-56.

and equality, to the development of the moral and artistic consciousness.

Some bourgeois ideologists find it impossible to conceal this truth. The American journalist Alvin Toffler, for instance, writes in his significantly titled book *Future Shock* that with the existing capitalist organisation of society the forces released by rapid technical progress threaten to destroy man. Toffler does not deny the need to replace capitalism by some other system of social organisation, but is far from realising that only socialism can provide such a system. Erich Kahler, in his book *The Meaning of History,* sees superrational civilisation degenerating into mechanised barbarity. Man, Kahler observes, having tremendously increased his control over nature, has lost control of himself, of his own nature. Illogically, however, Kahler tries to present the antagonistic nature of progress under capitalism as a feature of all human history. Many bourgeois ideologists write of the irreconcilable conflict between 20th-century scientific and technological progress, on the one hand, and a growing "cannibalistic morality", on the other, but they forget to confine this real conflict to the framework of capitalism.

In the four or more centuries of its existence capitalism has created a tremendous gap between the economic, political and cultural development of some peoples compared with that of others. Colonialism plunged whole continents into a state of stagnation. In some countries more than three-quarters of the population are illiterate owing to the antagonistic character of progress under capitalism. The sphere of imperialism's direct domination is today restricted to 8.3 per cent of the planet's territory and 13.1 per cent of its population. But imperialism continues to exploit the developing world and that means 120 countries, four-fifths of all the countries in the world, and one half of the world's population (it is estimated that by the year 2000 these countries will account for 60 per cent of the world total).

According to statistics and estimates for 1981, more than 700 million people in the developing regions of Asia, Africa and Latin America are starving or underfed; they have 455 million totally or partially unemployed; the total debts owed by all the developing countries in 1981 amount to 450,000 million dollars; trade conditions are deteriorating for them and the gap between prices of industrial goods and raw materials is widening; the food problem is becoming more acute; standards of living are falling.

Capitalism is preventing the further progress of mankind, the use of the miracles of human genius, the mighty sources of power in the interests of all men. As long as capitalism exists, the danger of a devastating thermonuclear war remains a real possibility.

4. The Distinctive Features of Historical Progress under Socialism

Socialism liberates historical progress from its antagonistic form, from social cataclysms. With the victory of socialism, Marx wrote, "then only will human progress cease to resemble that hideous, pagan idol, who would not drink the nectar but from the skulls of the slain".[1] Socialism repudiates war in principle as a means of solving controversial issues between states. The dialectics of social progress during the transition from capitalism to socialism and communism amounts to the following: from the inevitable occurrence of wars to the possibility of their prevention and, ultimately, to their complete elimination from the life of society.[2] Henceforth progress takes place not in the interests of some classes and nations and not at the cost of others. It bears its fruit for the whole of society. The development of the productive forces, of science and technology, the growth of social wealth signify a constant improvement in the material position and raising of the cultural level of all its members. This fact alone provides a material and moral stimulus to the creative activity of the members of socialist society. Progress not only in the sphere of production but also in the sphere of social relations, in politics, in cultural construction, in spiritual life becomes the concern of the whole people. This is what ensures the increased pace of social development in the conditions of socialism.

Socialism is not only a most important link in the ascending development of mankind, it is also the beginning of an era when social progress becomes continuous and all-embracing. "...*Only* socialism will be the beginning of a rapid, genuine, truly mass forward movement, embracing first the *majority* and then the whole of the population, in all spheres of public and private life."[3]

This scientific prediction has been fully realised in practice. No serious theoretician in the West any longer questions the fact of the extremely rapid development of the socialist countries, and particularly the Soviet Union.

The real possibilities of steady progress spring from the planned, scientific nature of socialist development, from the conscious and purposeful activity of the masses led by the Marxist-Leninist parties.

"*The achievements of the homeland of the October Revolution*

[1] K. Marx, *The Future Results of British Rule in India*, Vol. 12, p. 222.

[2] See F. V. Konstantinov, "Reason versus Madness" in *Pravda*, October 8, 1981.

[3] V. I. Lenin, *The State and Revolution*, Vol. 25, p. 472.

over a period of six decades convincingly show that socialism has attained unprecedented rates of progress in all areas of the life of society."[1] But the speed and stability of social progress under socialism are not automatic. There are still some phenomena that are not completely controlled and guided by society. To achieve rapid, harmonious and all-round development of socialist society one has to perfect the scientific management of all social processes, cut out mistakes of a voluntarist or any other type, conduct a systematic campaign against b ckward, conservative and bureaucratic elements and obviate all incompetent management in the various sectors of construction of the new society.

The development of socialism, like that of any society, cannot occur without contradictions, without overcoming certain difficulties. The emergence and development of a complex social organism like socialist society demands organised effort on the part of the broad mass of the people, and great insight and persistence in the struggle for the attainment of the goal.

It is a specific feature of socialism, however, that the resolving of its contradictions contributes to its ascending development. But this is not a spontaneous process. The development of socialism, its gradual transition to the second phase of communism involves the correct and timely understanding of any contradictions that may arise and the ability to deal with them effectively.

The critics of socialism assert that in socialist society progress is achieved only in the sphere of production and does not affect the individual. This lie has been exposed today by practical experience. It is socialism that has raised millions of people to conscious historical creativity, introduced them to culture and opened up wide opportunities for the versatile development of the individual. The highest achievement of socialism is the emergence of a new type of man with a collectivist consciousness, with a new humanist morality, a man actively devoted to the ideals of communism and armed with the most advanced world outlook.

With the complete disappearance of the capitalist system and the victory of communism the rate of historical progress will increase still further. The tremendous resources which are wasted today on preparations for and waging of wars, on building weapons of destruction, will be switched to the realisation of peaceful creative goals in the interests of all mankind. The complete elimination of work for private bosses, the eradication of the anarchy of produc-

[1] *On the 60th Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution*, Resolution of the CPSU Central Committee of January 31, 1977, Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, Moscow, 1977, p. 6.

tion and economic crises, the rapid application of scientific and technological discoveries, the planned and proportional development of the world economy, its specialisation and cooperation will unfold the widest prospects for historical development.

Victory of socialism is not the culmination of historical progress. The constant and ever increasing growth of the productive forces will be the basis of a further improvement in all aspects of social life and of human development itself. Communism is not the culmination, but the beginning of genuinely human history.

5. The Problem of Historical Progress in Contemporary Bourgeois Sociology

As the era of socialism approached, more and more bourgeois philosophers and sociologists dissociated themselves from the idea of ascending historical development.

This fear of the future has been redoubled among modern bourgeois theoreticians. It is no accident that the French sociologist Raymond Aron entitled one of his books *Disillusionment About Progress.*[1] Pointing to the devastating world wars and regarding them as fatally inevitable, assessing social revolutions as "disastrous events", many bourgeois ideologists assert that humanity is not ascending but descending, and even heading towards catastrophe. This false, pessimistic conclusion is also backed up by arguments concerning inevitable overpopulation and man's biological degeneration in the conditions of the scientific and techological revolution.

Some representatives of idealist sociology try to substitute for the idea of progress the neutral concept of "change". They assume that since both progressive and regressive movements take place in social life it is impossible to speak of any general ascending line of the historical process.

Repudiation of historical progress is connected with denial of the law-governed character of historical development. If there are no objective laws of history, as many Western sociologists assert, it is absurd to talk of a law of historical progress. Prompted by this interpretation of social life, the American historian George G. Iggers concludes: "We can accept the idea of progress today only with serious qualifications. Progress as yet is only a hypothesis and a very questionable one."[2] According to Iggers, we can have

[1] Raymond Aron, *Les désillusions du progrès. Essai sur la dialectique de la modernité*, Paris, Calmann-Levy, 1969.

[2] George G. Iggers, "The Idea of Progress: A Critical Reassessment", *The American Historical Review*, October 1965, Vol. 71, No. 1, p. 16.

only *faith* in the possibility of improving human life.

The arbitrary interpretation of historical facts and the inability to see what is paramount, necessary and law-governed beyond the conflict of mutually exclusive tendencies of social development, brings many bourgeois theoreticians to the mistaken idea that progress is not a scientific concept but merely an ethical evaluation of facts tinged with the subjectivism and relativism that are allegedly inherent in all ethical evaluations.

Other spokesmen of contemporary idealist sociology try to substitute for the idea of social progress the idea of eternal rotation. The advocates of this idea maintain that mankind passes through certain phases and then returns to the starting line, to begin all over again.

Of course, if one interprets the facts arbitrarily one can identify the primitive communal system with the communist society of the future, one can dig up "capitalism" in the ancient world, present socialist equality as a return to the "equality" of the early Christian communes, and then declare that everything repeats itself, everything returns and there is nothing new under the sun. Such assertions are based on superficial formal historical analogies and are highly subjective. The idea of the cyclical development of history with a continual return to the previous stages is deduced not from the actual historical process but from the religious imagination. The attempt to present the history of man as running in a circle is bound up with the desire to perpetuate stages of social development that have been consigned to the past.

If we do attempt to express the movement of history geometrically, we should speak not of a circle but of a spiral which, in ascending, only apparently returns to the initial position. Every new historical stage, while negating all that is obsolete and reactionary, simultaneously preserves and develops the achievements of previous generations. This rules out not only a return to the old ways, but also any marking time.

We noted above that not all cultural values are passed on from one generation to another, from one people to another. There are values that are recognised only within the framework of one civilisation and disappear forever with the society that created them. One can trace in the history of mankind certain isolated, unique civilisations that disappeared utterly, contributing nothing, or almost nothing, to the subsequent cultural process. By absolutising this phenomenon some bourgeois philosophers build up fallacious theories presenting the history of mankind as the coexistence of isolated civilisations, arising, developing and dying out with no need to communicate, to exchange values, to further develop the ma-

terial and intellectual attainments of other peoples.

The German philosopher Oswald Spengler, for instance, wrote: "Instead of the monotonous picture of rectilinear world history ... I see the phenomenon of a multiplicity of mighty cultures.... Each has its own idea, its own passions, its own life, desires and feelings and finally its own death...."[1] Spengler concentrates his attention only on the qualitative differentiation of civilisations and plays down everything that links and unites them. This is his case for denying the unity of the historical process and its development. In absolutising the fact of discontinuity in the development of civilisations, Spengler discards the factor of continuity, of the genetic continuous link between them. Following in the wake of Spengler, the German philosopher Karl Jaspers and particularly the British historian Arnold Toynbee, each in his own way, make an absolute of the qualitative uniqueness of civilisations and erase the continuity links between them, the specific assimilation of the achievements of one civilisation by another.

In contrast to this trend in the philosophy of history, which stresses the uniqueness of social phenomena and processes, some bourgeois philosophers and sociologists absolutise repetition in history. The American sociologist Pitirim Sorokin, for instance, reduces the process of man's historical development to the constant cyclical replacement of certain social-cultural supersystems by other similar systems. It stands to reason that the concepts of "progress" and "regress" cannot be applied to such a historical rotation.

Not all contemporary bourgeois ideologists deny progress in general. Some of them acknowledge progressive changes in spheres where they can be quantitatively expressed and cannot be interpreted as anything but progressive. Some believe this is so in scientific cognition and in technology. At the same time they repudiate the idea of progress in the economic sphere on the grounds that a more effective economy is not necessarily more justly organised. This latter assertion would evoke no objection if they had in mind private-property or, to be more exact, capitalist society. It is a fact that there is no just distribution of material or spiritual values in such a society. But history does not end with capitalism.

In the present age, with millions of people achieving social and national liberation, it is becoming increasingly difficult for bourgeois ideologists to deny the idea of progress in history. Many of

[1] Oswald Spengler, *Der Untergang des Abendlandes,* Beck, München, 1924, S. 27-28.

them therefore acknowledge progress but fundamentally distort its essence, direction, driving forces and criteria. In contrast to the social pessimists they try to prove that capitalism is ascending in its development and still remains the embodiment of social progress.

These quasi-optimists are unable to conceal the profound contradictions and social cataclysms engendered by bourgeois society but they assume that in the course of scientific and technological progress all the "darker sides" of capitalism will be overcome and it will cease to be a class-divided society and turn into a "welfare society". Life provides a ruthless exposure of this social utopia. Capitalism has long since become a force that hinders social progress, that excludes harmonious development of the productive forces in the interests of the whole of society. "It is farthest from the minds of Communists to predict an 'automatic collapse' of capitalism. It still has considerable reserves. Yet the developments of recent years forcefully confirm that capitalism is a society without a future."[1]

Many bourgeois ideologists, who identify social progress with the development of capitalism and regard socialism as a deviation from the highway of ascending historical development, rely on violence as the most reliable means of defending and perpetuating capitalist civilisation. Such conceptions are held by US President Reagan, who has declared communism an aberration, an abnormal way of life for human beings. Moreover, Ronald Reagan believes that communism is in decline. He has undertaken the mission of "writing it off" as a "sad, unnatural chapter in the history of mankind" and does not draw the line even at the use of nuclear force.

As Leonid Brezhnev has remarked, there has never been a period in history when peoples on all continents have been manipulated so cynically as they are now being manipulated by the aggressive forces of imperialism.[2] But the evidence of history testifies that not a single obsolete system in the past has ever succeeded in defending itself by means of violence, by holding man's ankles as he seeks to climb to a new level of social progress. The most extreme forms of imperialist violence did not prevent the victory of socialism in the USSR, the break-away of many other countries from capitalism and the emergence of the world socialist system.

The forces that are undermining capitalism continue to operate. By all available means capitalism seeks to preserve its existence. It combines violence with concessions, with reforms from above, and

[1] L. I. Brezhnev, *Report of the CPSU Central Committee to the 25th Congress of the CPSU and the Immediate Tasks of the Party in Home and Foreign Policy*, Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, Moscow, 1976, p. 34.

[2] See *Pravda*, October 28, 1981.

with the most sophisticated forms of brain-washing. In its efforts to postpone and buffer economic crises the modern bourgeois state resorts to intervention in economic life, to the application of certain elements of planning and forecasting of capitalist production. All these and other measures of self-preservation produce temporary results, but they cannot obviate the profound inner contradictions of a historically doomed system, and particularly the contradiction between the growing social character of production and the private capitalist form of appropriation, the contradiction between labour and capital. Imperialism intensifies social and national inequality. It stands in the way of the just distribution of material and spiritual values among all people and nations, fosters militarism and unleashes devastating, murderous wars. No efforts on the part of the ruling forces of feudalism were able to save it from defeat or prevent society from passing on to a new and higher stage. The same irreversible fate awaits capitalism.

CRITICISM OF CONTEMPORARY BOURGEOIS PHILOSOPHY AND SOCIOLOGY

Chapter XXI

CONTEMPORARY BOURGEOIS PHILOSOPHY

The history of philosophical thought has always been an arena of ideological struggle, which in the final analysis expresses the trends and ideologies of contending classes. Our century is no exception. Again and again it confirms Lenin's dictum that modern philosophy is just as partisan as that of 2,000 years ago, and that materialism and idealism are the two contending parties. However, the new conditions of social development and class struggle, the progress that has been made in the scientific cognition of nature and society are having a substantial impact on the form of philosophical theories, on the ways in which the traditional philosophical problems are solved. In preceding chapters we have described how these problems were treated by philosophy in the past and how they arise in new forms in the conceptions of contemporary idealism. In the present chapter we shall attempt to sum up the distinctive features of contemporary bourgeois philosophy and indicate its main trends and schools while at the same time revealing the unity within the diversity of the idealist schools, a unity that flows mainly from the common ideological aims with which they are confronted by conditions and the aims of the class struggle.

"There is no room for neutralism or compromise in the struggle between the two ideologies."[1] This proposition defining the essence and character of the contemporary ideological struggle reflects an objective law of the development of ideological social relations between the contending classes, which form the main part of the relations between the two opposed world systems, socialist and capitalist. And inasmuch as philosophy provides the method and world outlook for any ideological formation, it is constantly at the epicentre of ideological clashes.

1. The General Crisis of Capitalism and the Specific Features of Contemporary Idealism

In the epoch of imperialism all the contradictions inhereht in capitalism are exacerbated. Bourgeois ideology has to make some

[1] Ibid., p. 88.

attempt to understand the symptoms of the "disease" of contemporary capitalism and, since there is no hope of curing it, must in some way adapt them to its own purposes.

While Marxist philosophy expounds the concept of the general crisis of capitalism in the exact formulae of contemporary social science, bourgeois philosophy presents this concept as the crisis of "modern man" or " modern science", as the "spiritual crisis of the age" or the "crisis of technological civilisation". But it always ignores the specific historical character of this phenomenon, and the historical destiny of capitalism, which is doomed to extinction, is identified with the destiny of all humankind, with the "decline of world culture" or the "destruction of civilisation". Bourgeois philosophy's reactions to the idea of the inevitable victory of the new social relations vary from irrationalist "activism", which urges all-out resistance to this new phenomenon, to a pessimistic fatalism and calls to rely on God. Historical pessimism usually culminates in a belief in the irrationality and tragedy of human existence in general, allegedly due to the dehumanising influence of "organised" or "manipulated' society.

It was a characteristic illusion of the bourgeois philosophy of the 19th century to regard capitalism as capable of ensuring stable and prolonged social progress. Today it has bequeathed this illusion to bourgeois sociology with its concepts of the "industrial", "post-industrial", "technotronic" etc. societies, which are supposed to be replacing the opposed systems of capitalism and socialism. Although sociological conceptions often contain pessimistic forecasts (the ideas of "ecological catastrophe", "technological" pessimism and so on), bourgeois philosophy more frequently bases its analysis of the contradictions of social life on the idea that "crisis" is a permanent condition of the age.

An important symptom of the crisis in contemporary bourgeois philosophy is the fundamental change in its attitude to science and reason. Whereas the ideologists of the revolutionary bourgeoisie of the 17th and 18th centuries believed in the power of reason, the tendency today is to conclude that "all human experience testifies to the powerlessness of reason".[1] The point to note here is the rejection of social science as a means of objective social prediction confirming the communist perspectives of social development. This is why the British philosopher Karl Popper writes: "...we must reject the possibility of a theoretical history, that is to say, of a

[1] Hans-Georg Gadamer, "Uber die Macht der Vernunft", *Akten des XIV. Internationalen Kongresses für Philosophie. Wien. 2-9 September 1968,* Bd. 6, Verlag Herder, Wien, 1971, S. 29.

historical social science that would correspond to theoretical physics. There can be no scientific theory of historical development serving as a basis for historical prediction."[1]

There is another factor of no less importance. The rapidity and unexpectedness with which at the turn of the century the new picture of the world based on the theory of relativity and quantum mechanics superseded the old picture in which the dominant role was played by classical mechanics, led a number of scientists and philosophers, including some very influential ones, to renounce materialist epistemology, which had always been the spontaneous belief of the natural scientists. Lenin, who in his work *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* gave a detailed analysis of the "crisis in physics", summed up what was happening as follows: "Matter has disappeared..." Hence the conclusion was drawn that science does not provide us with objective truth and, essentially, has no significance in acquiring and formulating a view of the world, that science and world outlook are not commensurate, that a philosophical world outlook cannot provide a basis for the specialised sciences or be their result. This was the triple conclusion which led to the formation of positivist, irrationalist and religious principles in philosophy.

If science cannot provide us with an objective picture of the world, neither can philosophy as a science claim to do this either. The latter can be only the "theory of knowledge of the exact sciences", a "philosophy of science" ultimately losing its own independent subject-matter and becoming "analysis of language". This in the logic of *neo-positivism. Irrationalism* rejects the idea of scientific philosophy on the grounds that science is based on abstractions, deliberately ignores everything specific, "living", and has no impact on the "deeper sources of human existence". So philosophy must renounce its orientation on science and turn its attention to "the fullness of vital experience". It must be in principle not scientific but "another way of thinking, a thinking which in cognition simultaneously remembers me, awakens me, comes to my own self, and changes me",[2] wrote the existentialist philosopher Karl Jaspers.

If science is a mere assemblage of symbols stating something unknown about something unknown, it must contain a "mystery". What a lucky find this turn of thought was for *religious philosophy!* When the British astronomer and astrophysicist James Jeans

[1] Karl Popper, *The Poverty of Historism,* The Beacon Press, Boston, 1957, p. X.

[2] Karl Jaspers, *Existenzphilosophie,* Walter de Gruyter, Berlin, New York, 1974, S. 10.

published his book *The Mysterious Universe,* the neo-Thomist philosopher Étienne Gilson immediately seized upon this motion and "developed" it. "Now, if the universe of science is mysterious, what is not? We do not need science to tell us that the universe is indeed mysterious. Men have known that since the very beginning of the human race."[1] This was the meaning of religion. So religion was to play the role of a world outlook, and moreover one that was sanctified by millennia of human history.

Of course, the whole diversity of the idealist philosophical schools of the 20th century, which in itself testifies to the crisis in idealist philosophy as being unable to produce any integrated world outlook, cannot be reduced to these three leading trends in contemporary bourgeois philosophy, all of them based on belittlement of the significance of scientific cognition in evolving a world outlook. What is more, the pluralism of idealist philosophy has for long been the form of existence of bourgeois philosophy, which in various ways seeks to maintain its influence and adapt itself to the needs of the various sections of capitalist society. Nevertheless all the main currents in modern idealism and even the borderline, secondary schools gravitate towards them.

2. Neo-Positivism, as the Idealist "Philosophy of Science"

Positivism is a philosophy that stakes everything on concrete scientific knowledge and claims that there can be no other knowledge but this. In the 19th century it was Auguste Comte (1798-1857) who proclaimed that scientific ("positive") philosophy could be only the stating of the most general laws discovered by the positive sciences; since the latter studied only phenomena and not unknowable "entities", "things in themselves" and so on, both science and philosophy could be concerned only with these phenomena. Thus, while apparently showing the greatest respect for science, the positivism of the 19th century combined science with a subjective-idealist theory of knowledge. And this was the result: "Ultimate Scientific Ideas, then, are all representative of realities that cannot be comprehended. After no matter how great a progress in the colligation of facts and the establishment of generalisations ever wider and wider ... has been carried no matter how far, the

[1] Étienne Gilson, *God and Philosophy,* Yale University Press, New Haven, 1968, p. 122.

fundamental truth remains as much beyond reach as ever,"[1] wrote the British positivist Herbert Spencer.

Nevertheless, positivism built its picture of the world on the basis of the results of the science of its day. This, for example, was precisely what Spencer's own "synthetic philosophy" amounted to, in that it described nature and society as a process of gradual evolution guided by the laws of mechanics. The revolution in natural science, which showed that natural processes could not be reduced to mechanical processes, wrecked any such generalisation of science based on the absolutising of the relative truths that science had achieved. Ignorance of the dialectic of relative and absolute truths led in turn to a general rejection of any claims to create a universal picture of the world. The *empirio-criticism* of Avenarius, Mach and others, which superseded the first form of positivism, reduced philosophy to a theory of knowledge. Its guiding thesis was the assertion that cognition was no more than a linking up of sense-impressions that achieved no other "reality" except the sense impressions themselves.

This position did not, of course, signify "neutrality" in world outlook, as the positivists believed. Subjective idealism and agnosticism are also world outlooks. What is more, proceeding from the agnostic theory of knowledge one can substantiate any other world outlook, including that of religion. So the theory known as *pragmatism,* which arose within the general framework of positivism, combined these apparently mutually exclusive principles—on the one hand, positivism worshipping science and rejecting "metaphysics", and on the other, religious "metaphysics". Derived from the Greek "pragma" (practice, action), pragmatism is based on the belief that all knowledge is nothing more than "pragmatic belief", that is to say, a conditionally accepted proposition whose truth is proved not by its correspondence to reality but by the success of any action based upon it, even if the accepted proposition does not correspond to the actual state of the case or even contradicts it. The natural conclusion from this is that the task of cognition is not to formulate true (i. e. corresponding to reality) propositions but to "reinforce belief", which enables one to act confidently and achieve success.

On this basis Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914) was able to develop side by side the pragmatist theory of knowledge and an objective-idealist, religious "metaphysics". While another founder of pragmatism, William James (1842-1910) deduced from "the will

[1] Herbert Spencer, *First Principles,* Williams and Norgate, London, 1890, p. 66.

to believe" inherent in man and the "usefulness" of religion the legitimacy of "religious experience" and the religious life as the "belief that there is an unseen order, and that our supreme good lies in harmoniously adjusting ourselves thereto".[1] Of this philosopher Lenin wrote that with his help "pragmatism ridicules the metaphysics both of materialism and idealism, acclaims experience and only experience, recognises practice as the only criterion, refers to the positivist movement in general, ... and ... successfully deduces from all this a God for practical purposes...".[2]

Lenin's trenchant criticism of Machism and the related positivist trends of the early 20th century revealed "'...*along the whole line* of epistemological problems, the *thoroughly reactionary* character of empirio-criticism, which uses new artifices, terms and subtleties to disguise the old errors of *idealism* and *agnosticism*".[3] And although some epistemological ideas of empirio-criticism continued to circulate among philosophers studying the problems of natural science, as a school it rapidly declined and was replaced by neo-positivism.

Neo-positivism appeared at the beginning of the 20th century in connection with the successes of a new form of logical science, mathematical logic, or logic applied to the study of the foundations of mathematics. Frege, Russell, Couturat and others tried to substantiate mathematics by means of logical analysis, that is, by reducing its similar concepts to logical terms and then formulating all its propositions in the language of logic and according to its rules. On this basis it was thought that a similar application of logical analysis to philosophy would open up a new era in the development of the latter. But what had been extremely valuable for formal inquiry in mathematics, in philosophy resulted in neglect of vital problems.

In his book *Our Knowledge of the External World* (1914) Bertrand Russell (1872-1970) put forward the idea that all philosophical problems, if analysed and stripped of inessentials, are logical problems. On this basis Ludwig Wittgenstein (1899-1951) drew the conclusion that philosophy is not a doctrine, not a totality of theoretical propositions, but an activity consisting in the logical analysis of the language of science. Its result is "not a set of 'philosophical statements', but a clarification of statements".[4] This

[1] William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1916, p. 53.

[2] V. I. Lenin, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, Vol. 14, p. 342.

[3] Ibid., p. 357.

[4] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus logico-philosophicus*, Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt am Main, 1969, S. 32.

immediately disposes of philosophy's function in building a world outlook and synthesising the achievements of scientific knowledge, the creation of a philosophical theory. This restriction of philosophy to linguistic analysis is made even narrower by an idealist notion of the sphere in which this analysis may be applied and its philosophical meaning.

Neo-positivism bases its analysis of science on three fundamental theses. First, it makes a rigid distinction between analytical (logical-mathematical) and synthetic (factual, empirical) statements. The former are said to provide the elements of the formal structure of theory and have no cognitive substance. The latter constitute the empirical basis of theory. Second, neo-positivism is based on *reductionism,* that is, the assertion that all meaningful statements of theory may be reduced to direct experience or statements about it. And third, neo-positivism accepts the subjective-idealist theory of knowledge derived from Berkeley and Hume: our knowledge is not related to the objective world but to the "content of consciousness", to sensations ("observations", "experience") and their fixation in linguistic forms.

No wonder the theory of "verification" became the central feature of neo-positivism of the Vienna Circle, which emerged in the 1920s as a leading philosophical school.[1] The principle of verification played a triple role in neo-positivist analysis: the sensuous testing of empirical statements, definition of the empirical meaning of terms and statements and, finally, the "demarcation principle", the differentiating of empirical propositions from non-empirical and particularly "metaphysical" (philosophical) propositions with the purpose of removing the latter from the language of science. From this standpoint if a sentence cannot be reduced to a finite number of acts of experience or statements about such acts (i. e., "verified") and if, in addition, it is not a tautology, that is a statement of logical mathematics, it must either have been constructed in violation of the rules of syntax and is therefore meaningless, or is "metaphysical".

Thus the statements "2 x 2 = 4" or "all bachelors are unmarried" are tautologies, for it may easily be shown that the first statement means "4 = 4" and if in the second statement we substitute for the

[1] The Vienna Circle was formed at the end of the 1920s on the basis of the Chair of Philosophy of Inductive Sciences at Vienna University. It was headed by Moritz Schlick (1882-1936) and its most active members were Rudolf Carnap (1891-1970), Otto Neurath and Victor Kraft. The circle existed up to 1938, when after the invasion of Austria by nazi Germany, its members were forced to emigrate to the United States and Britain. This helped to spread and reinforce neo-positivism in the Anglo-Saxon countries.

all bachelors its dictionary meaning we get "all unmarried men are unmarried". Such statements as "it is four degrees below zero outside" or " all bachelors are eccentric" are empirical because we can verify them by looking at the thermometer or carrying out an empirical study of the habits of bachelors: if these habits differ from those of married men (accepted as the norm), then bachelors are eccentric: if not, the statement is still empirical, although erroneous. The statement "Caesar is and" breaks a rule of syntax by putting the connective "and", that is, a logical symbol, in place of the predicate. If a statement claims to be scientific but cannot be reduced to the logical or the empirical, it is "metaphysical".

Carnap explained this idea as follows: "I will call metaphysical all those propositions which claim they represent knowledge about something which is over or beyond all experience, e. g. about the real Essence of things, about Things in themselves, the Absolute, and such like....'The Essence and Principle of the world is Water', said Thales; 'Fire', said Heraclitus....From the Monists we learn: 'There is only one principle on which all that is, is founded'; but the Dualists tell us: 'There are two principles'. The Materialists say: 'All that is, is in its essence material', but the Spiritualists say: 'All that is, is spiritual'...". This happens, Carnap goes on, because all these statements are not empirically verifiable, because "from the proposition: 'The Principle of the world is Water' we are not able to deduce any proposition asserting any perceptions or feelings or experiences whatever which may be expected for the future".[1]

Consequently, neo-positivism classifies all philosophical problems as "metaphysics" and thus excludes them from the sphere of scientific knowledge: they are said to be scientifically groundless and their solutions cannot, as opposed to those of scientific problems, be acknowledged as true or false; they have no meaning. But this is a mistaken point of view. As we know, philosophy is a generalisation of scientific knowledge and social practice. Thus, Thales reached the conclusion about water being the first principle ("arche") of all things "by observing that all food is moist and that heat itself is generated from the moist and is kept alive by it (and that from which things are generated is the principle of all)".[2] So this is an original primitive scientific hypothesis and not simply a "metaphysical" fantasy. Similarly, materialist monism is a theory proved by the "long and difficult development of philosophy and natural science" (Engels). But here there is also something that

[1] Rudolf Carnap, "Logical Positivism", in: *The Age of Analysis*, The Riverside Press, Cambridge, 1955, pp. 212-13.

[2] *Aristotle's Metaphysics*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington-London, 1966, p. 17.

distinguishes it from the generalisations of natural science: the philosophical generalisation presupposes a certain method and world outlook in approaching cognition, and materialism demands that solutions be sought in the study of nature without resorting to supernatural, ideal principles. "Neutral" neo-positivism thus emerges as a "shame-faced idealism", advocating subjective idealism under the flag of "anti-metaphysical" philosophy.

Contemporary studies of scientific cognition and the relationship therein between the empirical and the theoretical have totally discredited the neo-positivist approach. The principle of verification as an "intellectual policeman" deciding what science may or may not discuss has given rise to more difficulties than it solved. Such obviously scientific statements as the formulations of general laws and general statements of science, statements about the past and future, are clearly unverifiable by direct observation. "Arsenic is poisonous", "bodies expand when heated", and "Caesar crossed the Rubicon"— not one of these statements can be directly verified, so should they be banished from science? Matters were made no easier by a more lenient formulation of the principle of verification: "An empirical statement is that which can in principle be tested by experience." There is knowledge which even "in principle" cannot be tested today, whereas tomorrow we shall be able to do so by developing techniques of observation. For example, Comte regarded as metaphysical the question of the chemical composition of celestial bodies because, so he supposed, it could not be established "in principle". But two years after his death spectral analysis was discovered. On the other hand, all kinds of nonsense are verifiable "in principle". For example, this is the case with "eschatological verification". Verification of the immortality of the soul is logically permissible because if the soul is immortal it can "in principle" return from another world and make a statement about its post-humous experience. And the immortality of the soul cannot be dismissed because "in principle" it is equally impossible to establish the non-existence of "the other world".

The misadventures of the "principle of verification" culminated in the principle itself turning out to be "metaphysical", that is, deserving to be discarded by science on the ground that it is neither a logico-mathematical or an empirical proposition. And all these difficulties arise from the fact that the principle of sensuous testing is an elementary means applied only in such very simple cases, as with the statement "it is four degrees below zero outside". The dialectical-materialist theory of practice as the criterion of truth (which assumes that in the simplest cases, for example, when measuring temperature, there is no need to appeal to all human

practice) is far more exact and more fully describes the problem of truth and also the problem of the relations between the concrete sciences and philosophy.

The collapse of the "principle of verification" and its transformation into a trivial proposition on the need for science to be based on experiment have led to an even greater restriction of philosophy to the sphere of language. The "linguistic philosophy" which is now the most widespread (at least in Britain) form of positivism has taken up "linguistic analysis" of the everyday language for purposes of "therapy", that is, ridding the language of its "philosophical disorders". From this standpoint philosophical statements are simply inexact, arbitrary interpretations of quite ordinary statements. Thus one of the most notable modern linguistic analysts, Gilbert Ryle, takes the following line. People often say: "Honesty compels me to state so and so." But, says Ryle, there is no such real factor as "honesty" and it cannot actually make me do anything, so it would be more correct to say: "Because I am honest, or wish to be honest, I am bound to state so and so."[1] So whenever we are confronted with such a statement we must "rephrase" it in such a way as to show us what it is actually about, and this will be "philosophical analysis". As the German historian of philosophy Wolfgang Stegmüller says, the aim of such analysis is "to clarify all philosophical problems out of existence".[2]

Obviously the problem has been oversimplified. In divorcing language from reality the linguistic analysts fail to see the social and epistemological dependence of philosophy, and their "linguistic analysis" is ultimately reduced to operations clarifying linguistic means of expression and linguistic communication, operations that are quite trivial from the philosophical point of view, although sometimes interesting from the standpoint of linguistics itself. Criticising the philosophy of linguistic analysis, the British philosopher C. W. K. Mundle said at the 14th International Congress of Philosophy that its supporters had made themselves prisoners who were permitted only to describe the behaviour of free men. "Free men are free to play many language-games; they use verbal tools for intellectually exciting tasks, like explaining, theorising, problem-solving. The prisoners are permitted only one monotonous game.... The prison he (Wittgenstein—*Ed.*) founded is still well

[1] Gilbert Ryle, "Systematically Misleading Expressions", in: *Logic and Language*, First Series, Edited with an Introduction by Antony Flew, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1968, p. 21.

[2] Wolfgang Stegmüller, *Hauptströmungen der Gegenwartsphilosophie*, Alfred Kroner Verlag, Stuttgart, 1969, S. 605, Cf. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1967, p. 51.

populated, though its doors still remain unbarred."[1]

But another point that the British critic does not notice is the fact that linguistic philosophy can do nothing but describe linguistic means; it cannot even improve on them. As Wittgenstein himself wrote, "Philosophy may in no way interfere with the actual use of language; it can in the end only describe it.... It leaves everything as it is."[2] That last sentence, whether or not the author so intended, perfectly expresses the social essence of neo-positivism: it is indeed a philosophy that leaves everything as it is. Regardless of the socio-political views that one or another neo-positivist may hold, the objective social role of neo-positivism consists in implanting philosophical nihilism and scepticism, in denying the possibility of a scientific view of the world.

Neo-positivism has come under increasing criticism in recent years. Its dogmas on the opposition between analytical (logical) and synthetic (empirical) statements are being called in question. The "reductionist" programme of boiling down theoretical knowledge to its empirical, sensuous base has been shown to be totally bankrupt. But because they retain the basic epistemological precept of neo-positivism, the subjective idealists and the critics of neo-positivism among students of the history, logic and philosophy of the natural sciences merely arrive at new versions of idealism. For example, the well-known American logician and philosopher Willard Quine rejected "two dogmas" of neo-positivist empiricism – the distinction between the analytical and the synthetic, and reductionism. But in his "empiricism without the Dogmas", theory, or the "conceptual scheme of science", turned out to be—a myth. A myth in which physical objects operate is, for practical purposes, more convenient than one peopled by Homer's gods. "For my part I do, qua lay physicist, believe in physical objects and not in Homer's gods; and I consider it a scientific error to believe otherwise. But in point of epistemological footing the physical objects and the gods differ only in degree and not in kind. Both sorts of entities enter our conception only as cultural posits."[3] But what about the object of theory, the material world? Then why not accept the religious explanation in the other sphere, in philosophy (and not in physics)?

Here we are confronted with the problem of the development of knowledge, the transition from mythology to the positive sciences.

[1] *Proceedings of the 14th International Congress of Philosophy*, Bd. 1, Herder, Wien, 1968, S. 352.

[2] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, p. 49.

[3] Willard Quine, *From a Logical Point of View*, Harper and Row Publishers, New York and Evanston, 1963, p. 44.

This problem cannot be interpreted without considering the growing depth of our knowledge. But in recent years conceptions have been appearing that deliberately ignore this fact. In Anglo-American philosophical science two such trends have developed. Generally speaking they derive from neo-positivism but they reject both the above-mentioned "dogmas of empiricism". In his book *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962) Thomas S. Kuhn presents the development of science as the superseding of "paradigms" in periods of scientific revolution and the logical development of their content in periods of "normal science". Although he vividly demonstrates the superseding of evolutionary stages by revolutionary stages, he fails to see the connection of the "paradigms" with the deepening of our knowledge of the objective world. For him their source is socio-psychological, a system of views accepted by the "scientific community".

On the other hand, Karl Popper sees in the development of scientific knowledge a "natural process" of self-development of a "third world"—the world of objective knowledge. "It is the world of possible objects of thought: the world of theories in themselves, and their logical relations; of arguments in themselves, and of problem situations in themselves."[1] Created by human beings, unlike the world of ideas of Plato or the Hegelian Idea, this third world is nonetheless "autonomous". "Knowledge in the objective sense is knowledge without a knower: it is knowledge without a knowing subject."[2] But this quasi-objectivism is only the reverse side of neo-positivist subjectivism, which restricts knowledge to the sphere of language. Popper's third world is a world of language and the theories and arguments expressed therein. No one doubts that in the course of its logical development scientific theory generates new problems and arguments, new theory. But this development always has objective reality—mediated by the structure of theory—as its basis; the development itself cannot take place without the knowing subject, the scientist, without "scientific communities", scientific institutes, and so on.

The history of neo-positivism is a history of its defeats, a history of a succession of forms of language analysis which is now culminating in the disintegration of this once influential philosophical trend.

[1] Karl Popper, *Objective Knowledge. An Evolutionary Approach*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1972, p. 154.
[2] Ibid., p. 109.

3. Contemporary Irrationalism. Existentialism

No other social formation more than capitalism at its imperialist stage has deserved the judgement implied in Goethe's remark "reason madness has become, goodness torment". Not for nothing does irrationalism, a philosophy proclaiming the unreason, the absurdity of all that exists, figure as one of the most influential trends in contemporary bourgeois thought.

The horrors and disasters of the First World War had already destroyed the illusions of the bourgeois liberalism of the last century with regard to a rational, harmoniously developing process of unending progress in history. This illusion was replaced by a feeling that human existence was meaningless, that there was no future for the historical process and that no one could do anything about it. This feeling was intensified during the Second World War and has predominated in people's minds ever since.

Better than any other trend in contemporary bourgeois philosophy *existentialism* has been able to describe and at the same time justify this feeling of the "pointlessness of existence", this "self-alienation", the way in which "man sees himself as becoming increasingly alienated, estranged from his own essence to such an extent that he begins to question this essence".[1] For this reason existentialism has for nearly half a century been the predominant form of irrationalism.

Existentialism arose in the 1920s. Its main exponents are Martin Heidegger and Karl Jaspers in Germany, Gabriel Marcel, Jean-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus in France. It has become widespread in Italy, Spain, Latin America and partly in the United States. The Russian émigré philosophers Nicolas Berdyayev and L. Chestov were also close to existentialism.

Existentialism has at least three main sources. First, it develops the ideas of the 19th century Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard, who proposed the actual concept of existentia. Unlike the "abstract thinker" of traditional philosophy and science, the "existing thinker" must consider reality subjectively, that is, only as it is refracted through his individual existence and emotional (for Kierkegaard primarily religious) life. "Whereas objective thinking is indifferent to the thinking subject and his existence," he wrote, "the subjectivie thinker... is substantially interested in his thought: it exists in him."[2] Consequently his philosophical pre-

[1] G. Marcel, *Der Mensch als Problem,* Frankfurt a./M., 1964, S. 18.
[2] S. Kierkegaard, *Gesammelte Werke,* Bd. 6, Diederichs, Jena, 1925, S. 155.

mise differs radically from that of scientific objectivity. Secondly, existentialism borrows from the German philosopher Edmund Husserl the "phenomenological method" based on intuition that takes as its "object" the intrinsic structures of "pure consciousness", which in this context turns out to be the point of departure of both cognition and its objects. The technique of "phenomenological" description of consciousness was used by existentialism to describe the structure not of the knowing consciousness but of the acting consciousness, consciousness that suffers and feels, that is mortal, the structure of "existence", which does not simply know the world but enhances it with all the colours of its emotional states: anxiety, fear and fear of death, determination, loneliness, guilt, responsibility, and so on. And thirdly, existentialism inherits the irrationalism of the "philosophy of life", relying especially on Nietzsche.

The fundamental principle of existentialism is the assertion that existence precedes essence or, which is the same thing, that one must begin from subjectivity. As stated in Sartre's book *Existentialism Is Humanism* (1946),[1] this thesis clearly testifies to the subjective idealism of this trend. But there are also differences. Whereas in the classical subjective idealism of the past the denial of the objective existence of the external world or, at least, of its knowability was combined with faith in the knowability of the subject, the situation is now changed. Existentialism asserts that even the subject itself cannot be known by means of rational cognition. "Existence," wrote Karl Jaspers, "is that which never becomes the object, it is the Origins from which I think and act, about which I make statements in developing the course of my thought, which knows nothing."[2]

But why cannot existence be the object? Why is it rationally unknowable? In the first place, say the existentialists, because it is individual, whereas rational knowledge demands the universal. And secondly, existence is I myself; but I cannot look at myself "from outside" as I look at objects when I am engaged in scientific research. Hence the opposition between the "problem" of science and the "mystery" of existentialist philosophy.

This distinction was drawn by Gabriel Marcel, who wrote: "...between a problem and a mystery there is the essential difference that a problem is something which I encounter, which I find in its entirety before me, but which I can consequently take in and

[1] J.-P. Sartre, *L'existentialisme est un humanisme*, Nagel, Paris, 1946, p. 24.
[2] Karl Jaspers, *Philosophie*, 1. Buch, Springer, Berlin, Göttingen, Heidelberg, 1948, S. 13.

bring under my control, whereas a mystery is something in which I myself am involved, and which is therefore conceivable only as *a sphere in which the distinction of that which is in me and that which is before me loses its significance and initial value.* While an authentic problem obeys a certain technique with the help of which it can be clearly defined, a mystery by definition transcends all conceivable techniques."[1] If I can, say, solve a mathematical equation by using a technique that is known to me, anyone who knows this technique will agree with me and accept my solution. But the mysteries of being—death and immortality, the existence or non-existence of God, love, truth, and not the truth that is learned by heart but the truth for which men sacrifice their lives—cannot be separated from my own self, from my personal decision; they cannot become general knowledge.

As we see, important questions concerning human life and knowledge are raised here. But in tackling them existentialism rules out from the start the objective and, above all, the *social* meaning of these questions. In place of a scientific solution it offers the religious idealist solution. "Does not the very fact ... of our life," writes Marcel, "of human life imply for everyone who thinks about it in depth, the existence of a kind of metaphysical Atlantis, which by definition cannot be explored but whose presence in reality confers on our experience its volume, its value, and its mysterious density?"[2] This "Atlantis" is God, whose existence, according to Marcel, is constantly felt by man. "Anyone who has experienced the presence of God not only has no need of proof but will perhaps go so far as to regard the idea of proof as an affront to that which for him is sacred evidence. From the standpoint of the philosophy of existence it is a similar type of evidence that provides its central and irreducible datum."[3] A similar kind of "evidence", but opposite in content, brings Sartre to the conclusion that "there is no God", a conclusion which, he maintains, is in principle unprovable.

Existentialism also finds confirmation of the irrationality of human existence in the fact that the "real depths" of existence are revealed to us only in special conditions, which Jaspers calls *"eine Grenzsituation"* ("a frontier situation"). Such situations are death, suffering, terror, struggle, guilt, religious ecstasy, mental illness, and so on. Only at such moments does man spontaneously become aware of his "real existence" (his freedom) which is hidden in

[1] Gabriel Marcel, "Être et avoir", *I. Journal métaphysique (1928-1933)*, Aubier-Montaigne, 1968, p. 146.

[2] Gabriel Marcel, *Du refus à l'invocation*, Gallimard, Paris, 1940, p. 124.

[3] Gabriel Marcel, *Le Mystère de l'être. II. Foi et réalité*, Auvier, Paris, 1951, p. 177.

ordinary conditions behind the "daily routine", the "unreality" of ordinary existence or what Heidegger calls the domination of "das Man". People's ordinary, everyday existence together completely dissolves true being in the mode of being of "the others". "We enjoy ourselves as they do in general, we read, we look at, and discuss literature and art, as they do.... Das Man, which is something indefinite and at the same time everything, although not the sum total, lays down what the mode of everyday existence shall be."[1]

This frequently cited proposition of Heidegger's may serve as the starting point for our explanation of the social significance of existentialism. Heidegger uses the term "das Man" derived from the impersonal pronoun "man", which is used in German to form impersonal sentences, such as "man sagt" ("they say") "man muss" ("it is necessary"), to imply the impersonality and lack of colour, the facelessness of human existence in society, its dissolution in the ordinariness of circumstances. However, having revealed this characteristic feature of the position of the individual in exploiting, class-divided society, Heidegger at once disguises it by asserting that "impersonality" and "ordinariness" are a property of society as such, the mode of existence of man in any society. It follows then that, according to existentialism, no change, however radical, can do away with this impersonal, alienated existence.

The concept of "unreal existence", for which there are various terms, is typical of all schools of existentialism. At times it reveals some rather profound features of social life. Thus, Marcel opposes "possession" to "existence". The things I possess, he says, possess me. So our property "eats us up". Thus Marcel discovers in "possession", that is to say, in property, the source of the inhumanity of the world of private property. But how is man to be liberated from this bondage to property, to things? Marxism sees the way out in abolishing private ownership of the means of production, that is to say, in abolishing capitalist social relations. Marcel sees the source of the contradiction between "being" (humanity) and "possession" (property) in man himself, in the dual nature of his existence, and seeks escape in love and compassion, in "sacrifice" and finally in religion, art and philosophy, which, he maintains, have the power to raise possession to the level of being. But these are typically religious and idealist solutions that have failed in their purpose for thousands of years because, at best, they amount to no more than good intentions and, quite often, hypocritical preaching by those

[1] Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, Max Nimeyer Verlag, Tübingen, 1953, S. 126-27.

who have to those who have not.

The philosophy of existentialism is a vivid expression of bourgeois *individualism.* But this individualism differs substantially from the traditional individualism which regards man as "social atom", a self-sufficient social unit. In the 20th century this idea is anachronistic because social life today quite obviously and inevitably draws every individual into its orbit. Even the relatively independent existence of the individual (or family, the social nucleus) that provided the foundation for the social atomism of the 19th century is today quite inconceivable. For this reason existentialism attaches great significance to the social relationship ("the other", as it is expressed in the language of existentialist philosophy), but it gives this relationship its own interpretation. The essence of existentialist individualism is that social relations are regarded as relations of *conflict,* which draw people together only because they divide them. According to Jaspers, the link between people ("communication" as "life with others") is communication between *lone individuals*: "In every removal of loneliness by communication there grows up a new loneliness which cannot disappear without my ceasing to exist as a condition of communication."[1] In Jaspers' view the initial form of communication is a relationship of domination and subservience. In these conditions the desire for communication is inevitably combined with fear of communication, doubts as to its possibility, etc.

Thus existentialism once again expresses the actual contradictions and conflicts of social relations in capitalist society. But it immediately disguises these contradictions by making them an inherent element in "human existence" as such and therefore indestructible. The antagonism born of exploiting society is held to be the universal relationship between man and man.

In bourgeois literature existentialism is often called the "philosophy of freedom". Certainly the problem of *freedom* does occupy an important place in existentialism. But what is the essence of *freedom*? How is it interpreted by existentialism? Jean-Paul Sartre wrote: "Man cannot be sometimes a slave and sometimes free: he is either always and entirely free, or he does not exist at all."[2] What does this mean? From the standpoint of Marxist philosophy real freedom is the ability to act on the basis of knowledge of necessity, "knowing what one is doing". Consequently, freedom demands real means for its realisation. If there are none, there is no freedom and it has still to be fought for. Existentialism, on the other hand,

[1] Karl Jaspers, *Philosophie,* 2. Buch, S. 348.
[2] Jean-Paul Sartre, *L'être et le néant,* Gallimard, Paris, 1943, p. 516.

essentially reduces freedom to impulsive emotional choice. True freedom reveals itself to a person in anxiety, distress and loneliness. "Distress, loneliness, responsibility ... constitute, in effect, the *quality* of our consciousness inasmuch as this is pure and simple feedom."[1] Consequently, freedom is an unconscious, instinctive act, devoid of any objective content. True, this is not arbitrariness; according to Sartre, a person is an entity and can be judged on the basis of the most insignificant action, no matter how arbitrary it may appear. But for Sartre the actual shaping of a person and his behaviour is a profound mystery. Consequently the ways of influencing him, of transforming his consciousness and behaviour as a free person also remain a mystery.

Sartre combines freedom with *responsibility*. In fact, he treats them as identical. "...Man, being condemned to be free, bears on his shoulders the burden of the whole world: he is responsible for the world and for himself as a mode of being."[2] In formulating this idea Sartre proceeded from the sense of responsibility for the fate of France and all mankind that rested on the shoulders of the French Resistance fighters during the Second World War. This tragic situation had a serious influence on the work of Sartre and other French existentialists; it formed the basis of whole trend of "literature of responsibility". However, in his theory of freedom Sartre ignores this factor, and in his work real responsibility is dissolved in abstract "absolute responsibility", and this latter turns into absolute irresponsibility. Because, first, the responsibility of social classes, groups and individuals is represented as "responsibility in general", the equal responsibility of "everyone", and, secondly, Sartre recognises no objective criteria of right or wrong action, that is to say, objective criteria of responsibility. The result of all this is that his conception of freedom turns out in the long run to be a meaningless abstraction. The socio-political meaning of this theory is revealed in the existentialist conception of guilt as a universal possibility of human existence.

Now we can answer the question posed by Marcel: "Who is to blame?" Existentialism replies firmly, clearly and—wrongly: "No one is to blame!" In examining the "German guilt", the responsibility of the Germans for the world war, in his work *The Question of Guilt* (1946) Jaspers sees the "initial" and "original" metaphysical (philosophical) guilt, that is, the essence of the responsibility for the war in "human existence" as such, this is universal guilt, an outbreak of evil in general, but on German

[1] Ibid., pp. 541-42.
[2] Ibid., p. 639.

soil.[1] And this means that although certain individuals, criminals, cannot be exonerated, the responsibility is at all events lifted from the direct culprit—German imperialism. And man turns out to be powerless in the face of this "human existence": it is both unknowable and beyond all possibility of control or transformation. Whereas in the atheist existentialist this gives rise to real despair ("If there is no God, everything is permissible", both Sartre and Camus quote Dostoyevsky), religious existentialism pins its hopes on God and seeks salvation in religion, the well tried means of consolation and hope, which transfers the satisfaction of desires and quelling of passions and fears to the other world.

4. Religious Philosophy in the 20th Century. Neo-Thomism

Contemporary religious philosophy is not something whole and integrated. It is broken up into various creeds and types of philosophical thinking and its exponents associate themselves with various schools of philosophy. Thus we may encounter Christian, Judaic, Moslem and Buddhist philosophy. Christianity embraces Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox philosophy; within the framework of Catholicism, there are the neo-scholastic schools. In religious philosophy there are also such irrationalist trends as the theological existentialism of Karl Barth, Paul Tillich and others in Protestant religion, the existentialism of Martin Buber in Judaism, and neo-Augustinism (followers of the "Father of the Church" Augustine) in Catholic philosophy. A widespread belief in capitalist countries is *personalism*— a religious philosophy that recognises the world as the expression of the creative activity of the divine personality.

The most representative school of contemporary religious philosophy is *neo-Thomism,* which revives the scholastic system of Thomas Aquinas, the 13th-century philosopher.

Two trends may be singled out in neo-Thomism. One of them, "paleo-Thomism", whose advocates call themselves "strict Thomists", preserves the teaching of Thomas Aquinas absolutely intact, believing that his works contained the answers to all philosophical problems. The other trend—neo-Thomism proper—holds to the maxim formulated by Pope Leo XIII: "Enrich the old with the new" and tries to "develop" the Thomist theses, which even from

[1] Karl Jaspers, *Die Schuldfrage,* in: K. Jaspers, *Lebensfragen der deutschen Politik,* Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, München, 1963, S. 95.

the neo-Thomist point of view are obsolete, by borrowing certain ideas from the philosophy of modern times (particularly from Kant) or from present-day philosophy (phenomenology, neo-positivism, etc.) But the main content of Thomism: religious postulates on the existence of God, the immortality of the soul, free will and also certain purely philosophical propositions (theory of the reality of the material world created by God, theory of the transcendental world, "rationalism", etc.), remains unshaken.

Why has Thomism become such a convenient system of philosophy? What has made it so easily adaptable to the needs of modern bourgeois ideology? To answer these questions we must return to the system of Thomas Aquinas. Thomas combined Aristotle's philosophy with Catholic theology. He succeeded in avoiding the extremes of the irrationalist denial of scientific knowledge in favour of faith and the rationalist antithesis between reason and faith as two independent sources of truth (the "theory of dual truth"). With notable courage, considering this was the 13th century, Thomas Aquinas declared that in the sphere of human knowledge the argument from authority is the weakest of all. At the same time "human knowledge", from his point of view, is subordinated to "divine" knowledge—knowledge which, while *not opposed* to reason is *above* reason. "Christian theology," Thomas wrote, "springs from the light of faith, philosophy—from the natural light of reason. Philosophical truths cannot contradict the truths of faith. They are, of course, insufficient, but they also permit of general analogies: some of them, moreover, anticipate (the "truths" of faith—*Ed.*), because nature is the presage of bliss."[1] It is these ideas of Thomas' that form the basis of the neo-Thomist thesis on the "harmony of faith and reason", which sets out to prove that reason (scientific thinking) is free in its judgements up to the point when it contradicts faith. According to neo-Thomism, philosophy is independent of science but dependent on religious dogma. Science, on the other hand, has no right to propound and solve philosophical problems, because in doing so it would exert a reciprocal influence on philosophy.

But what gives faith and religious philosophy the right to interfere in the affairs of science? At this point neo-Thomism attempts to make subtle use of the actual relationships between the various sciences. Various branches of science are indeed closely connected and the scientist working in one field of knowledge must keep in mind what is being said by a related science. For instance, there

[1] Sancti Thomae de Acquino, *Expositio super librum Boethii de Trinitate*, Leiden, Brill, 1955, p. 94.

can be no contradiction between physics and chemistry in the understanding of the properties of molecules, and physics must subordinate its mathematical apparatus to the authority of mathematics, and so on. The situation is analogous, say the neo-Thomists, in the relationship between faith and reason, theology and philosophy, philosophy (religious!) and science. An attempt is made to combine the formal independence of certain sciences from philosophy and of philosophy from theology with the fact that materially (i.e., from the standpoint of content) they are interdependent. There is as little use in the philosopher's trying to overthrow the *authentic* data of theology as in his trying to overthrow the *authentic* conclusions of the specialised sciences.

However, this is nothing more than sophistry. There is simply no comparison between the authenticity of scientific knowledge and the "authenticity" of the theological dogma, drawn from primitive religious myths that arose in the absence of scientific knowledge. Far from regulating the philosophical conclusions of science the myths and dogmas of religion should be repudiated by science and scientific-materialist philosophy.

This is why many religious philosophers, in seeking to avoid a direct confrontation between science and religion, tend to follow the neo-positivists in claiming that religious dogmas belong to quite a different field of knowledge from empirical science and thus cannot come into contradiction with it.[1] Both these precepts—subordination of the content of philosophy and the concrete sciences to theology, on the one hand, and the creation of an antithesis between them, on the other—differ from each other only in form. Their purpose is the same: to preserve religion, to defend its significance as the world outlook against science and scientific philosophy. At the same time the difference between these precepts engenders different attitudes to the difficulties that arise in the course of scientific progress. Some religious philosophers make use of science so as to "ascend to God" by relying on certain scientific hypotheses. For this purpose everything that contradicts dogma is rejected, while everything that appears to agree with it is seized upon and made use of. Thus to "substantiate" the existence of God and the creation of the world use is made of the "theory of the heat death of the Universe", the hypotheses on the "finitude"

1 "We are no longer troubled by apparent discrepancies between scientific theories and *Genesis;* for ... every sensible person realises that the Bible was not designed to be a handbook of astronomy or of any other branch of science" (Frederick Copleston, *Contemporary Philosophy,* Burns and Oates, London, 1956, p. 32). But is it so? This is in fact just what it was designed for, but science deprived it of that function.

of the Universe, the difficulties of the scientific explanation of life, the mind, and so on. But the discoveries of present-day natural science testify not to the creation of the world by God but to the internal activity, the self-motion of matter, to the fact that the material world does not need a "creator" or "mover"—God. No wonder many neo-Thomists, experiencing justifiable doubts concerning proofs of the finitude of the Universe based on the idea, for example, of its "heat death" prefer to take a more cautilous attitude to scientific facts, avoiding the rigidity of theology. These philosophers interpret scientific hypotheses and facts in the spirit of ophers interpret scientific hypotheses and facts in the spirit of Thomas Aquinas and the principles of Catholicism.
ophy, which is based on hylemorphism (from the Greek *hyle—matter, and morphe*—form), that is to say, the assertion that all phenomena of nature consist of matter and form, and that form determines matter. Natural objects are arranged in a hierarchy according to the degree of perfection of their form, the lower rungs being occupied by inorganic bodies, followed by the organic, plants, animals, and finally by man. In society, too, there is the secular and ecclesiastical hierarchy, and above that, the "celestial" hierarchy. In the view of Thomas Aquinas, which has been accepted by neo-Thomism, the highest rung in this hierarchy is determining, and so it cannot be represented evolutionally, as the creation of the higher by the lower.

Neo-Thomist natural philosophy draws its explanation from a "metaphysics", which operates with such concepts as "being", "act and potential" and "essence and existence". Analysis of these concepts reveals the barren scholasticism of the neo-Thomist doctrine. Take the Thomist conception of "being", for example.

In neo-Thomist metaphysics the initial concept of "being" is achieved by abstraction from the whole concrete content of the world. As the most general concept, being can be defined only tautologically: "being is the being", "being is not non-being", "between being and non-being there is no middle term". This is how the laws of formal logic (identity, contradiction, the excluded middle) are deduced as attributes of being. Then come six "transcendentals", that is to say, concepts characterising all that exists: *ens* (essence), *res* (thing), *unum* (unity), *aliquid* (other), *verum* (truth), *bonum* (good). Sometimes, however, only four transcendentals—unity, truth, good and beauty—are used. Since these are properties of everything that exists, they can be applied by analogy, to "the most real being of all"— God—and serve as his attributes. Inasmuch as they are applied to God only by analogy, we know that they are inherent in God but do not know how they

are inherent. Thus Thomism avoids, on the one hand, agnosticism, which denies the possibility of knowing the divine attributes, and on the other, anthropomorphism, which ascribes human attributes to God.

The concept of being (essence) is made concrete by borrowing Aristotle's concepts of potential (possibility) and act (reality). Unlike Aristotle, who believed these concepts to be the expression of real processes of the transformation of possibility into reality, neo-Thomism regards possibility as the expression of the *imperfection* of every finite being. Apart from God, which is a "pure act", all being is a combination of act and potential. Thus a child is actually a child but potentially an adult. The relationship of act and potential is the starting point for considering other categories: essence and existence (essence is potential that is realised in existence), substance and its properties—accidences (accidences are related to substance as the potential is to the act), formation (transition of potential into act; any formation is therefore imperfect being). Here, too, one is struck by the emptiness of the Thomist concepts. The neo-Thomists have no idea of the dialectics of possibility and reality; for them these categories become the basis of a religious dualism that contrasts deity and its "perfections" to the material world as something "imperfect".

This dualism is particularly striking in the neo-Thomist theory of knowledge, which is usually characterised by two concepts: "realism" and "rationalism". The first signifies that neo-Thomism proceeds from a reality that is independent of *human* reason. But this "realism" is at once rendered meaningless by the assertion that the real world depends on *divine* reason, since it is a creation of God, that is to say, a formation that is ideal in its essence. The neo-Thomists also recognise "reality", that is to say, the independence of "universals", or general concepts, from the human mind. They take the stand of moderate realism,[1] recognising that the universals exist before things (in the mind of God), in things (as their essence, insofar as the mind can conceive it) and after things (in the form of the concepts of the human mind). So sensory cognition, whose definite role is recognised by neo-Thomism, is concerned only with the "material envelope", whereas the essence of things can be known only by the intellect. Thus the "realism" of the neo-Thomists is objective idealism.

We fare no better with the neo-Thomists' claims to "ration-

[1] The "realist" doctrine of the universals took shape in the Middle Ages. The radical realists maintained that the universals actually existed only in the mind of God, whereas the material world was an imperfect copy of them.

alism". The neo-Thomists believe that they renounce irrationalism and recognise the merits of reason and intellect. But Thomist "rationalism" is pseudo-rationalism inasmuch as it acknowledges the primacy of the revealed "suprarational truth" over human reason and science. The neo-Thomists follow Thomas in trying to use reason itself, as far as its limited powers permit to "prove" the existence of God. Thus Thomist and neo-Thomist pseudo-rationalism is wholly placed at the service of religion. By compelling reason to defend faith it also abolishes philosophy as a source of knowledge. Bertrand Russell made the point well when he wrote: "Before he [Thomas Aquinas—*Ed.*] begins to philosophise, he already knows the truth; it is declared in the Catholic faith.... The finding of arguments for a conclusion given in advance is not philosophy, but special pleading."[1] This probably says all that needs to be said about the theoretical significance of neo-Thomism.

Medieval Thomism provided the philosophical "substantiation" of the ideology of feudalism. Neo-Thomism has been able to perform this function for modern capitalism. This is to be seen in its defence of private ownership, which is acknowledged as one of the *"most essential forms of organisation of society"*,[2] and in its constant criticism of materialism and atheism, particularly dialectical and historical materialism. But both in its defence of capitalism and in its anti-Marxism religious philosophy finds allies and supporters in other trends of 20th century bourgeois philosophy. These we shall now consider in our concluding section.

5. The Unity of Contemporary Bourgeois Philosophy

"Bourgeois ideology assumes a variety of forms and uses the most diverse methods and means of deceiving the working people. But their essence is the same—defence of the obsolescent capitalist system."[3] These words in the Programme of the CPSU perfectly express the unity not only of bourgeois ideology as such but also of the philosophical trends and schools that provide its "theoretical" foundation. This unity in diversity presents itself to us in different ways. What we must first discuss is the fact that in practice all

[1] Bertrand Russell, *History of Western Philosophy, and Its Connection with Political and Social Circumstances from the Earliest Times to the Present Day*, p. 485.

[2] Gustav Gundlach, *Die Ordnung der menschlichen Gesellschaft*, Bd. I, J. P. Bachem Verlag, Köln, 1964, S. 35.

[3] *Programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1961, p. 51.

contemporary bourgeois philosophy belongs to one "party in philosophy" (Lenin), the fact of the idealism of contemporary philosophical thought in capitalist society. Secondly, the various trends and schools operate in the framework of this unity as "supplementary" conceptions, making up for each other's limitations and the obvious shortcomings they lead to. And thirdly, against a background of diversity the idealist schools show a fairly clear tendency to integrate, to unite their theoretical premises and solutions. We must now consider these aspects of the ideological unity of bourgeois philosophy in more detail.

With the exception of certain minor trends in the capitalist countries containing more or less obvious and substantial materialist tendencies (the "realist" schools, "naturalism" and "scientific materialism", a contemporary variety of the natural-scientific materialism of the scientists, etc.), contemporary bourgeois philosophy is, as we have seen, idealism. Its general epistemological source is the absolutising of certain aspects of human consciousness or its products, such as language, and their transformation from a particular aspect to the essence, to a fundamental fact or process on which a whole world outlook is built. This springs from the bourgeois philosophers' undialectical interpretation of the crisis phenomena in science of the 20th century and the general crisis of capitalism. We have seen how this leads to the absolutising of emotional life, the antagonism-torn consciousness of modern man as an agent of 20th century capitalist society. We have seen this absolutising of the logical analysis of language leading to the notion of philosophy as "activity" and not theory, and its conversion on this basis into a "linguistically" formulated subjectivism.

However, the best evidence of the underlying unity of bourgeois philosophy is to be found in its relation to religion. It is no accident that Lenin defined idealism as a refined form of fideism, that is to say, a theory that substitutes faith for knowledge. And it is a fact that although nearly all neo-positivists are inclined to call themselves atheists or at least free thinkers,[1] the philosophical scepticism of this trend leads directly to a reconciliation with religion. Let us compare two statements, one by a neo-positivist and the other by a neo-Thomist:

"It is worth mentioning that... there is no logical ground for antagonism between religion and natural science. As far as

"We see now that there is not, and cannot be, any conflict between religion and science in the sense in which that conflict

[1] Some of them take a fairly strong stand against religion. See, for example, Bertrand Russell, *Why I am not a Christian*, Allen and Unwin, London, 1955.

the question of truth or falsehood is concerned there is no opposition between natural scientist and the atheist who believes in a transcendent God." (A. J. Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic,* (Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1976, pp. 154-55).

was understood in the last century; for no verified statement can contradict a revealed dogma."
(Frederich Copleston, *Contemporary Philosophy, Studies of Logical Positivism and Existentialism,* Burns and Oates, London, 1956, p. 32).

The difference, you see, is only one of preference, of whether we accept the scientifically "unverified", metaphysical statement of the atheism that there is no God, or the equally "metaphysical" religious world view "verified" by revelation and sanctified by millennia of religious practice. Naturally, when the question is stated in this way atheism is the only loser, for religion has long since renounced any support from science.

We have already discussed how irrationalism links up with religion. This is simple enough for existentialism which in its basic premises is very close to certain forms of religious philosophy, particularly mysticism. In cases when we are dealing with atheistic philosophising, as for example in Sartre, existentialism acknowledges neither the possibility of denying the existence of God, nor the fact that anything changes as a result: if there were a God, everything would still be the same. This is why man, compelled to seek support only in his own subjectivity, is in such a grave predicament. "Thus we have neither behind us nor before us ... any excuse or justification. We are alone without excuse. This is what I mean when I say that man is condemned to be free."[1]

In their turn the theologists and religious philosophers gladly accept the helping hand that has been offered to them. They make wide use, for example, of the methods of linguistic analysis evolved by logicians and neo-positivists to "substantiate" the truth of religious statements. Such, for example, is the "logic of religion" of the neo-Thomist Loseph M. Bochenski, who sets out to make this logic a subsidiary discipline for theology by solving all the problems that usually confront logic: justification of religious language, analysis of its structure and its relation to other languages, clarification of the problem of the meaning and substantiation of the propositions of religion.[2] As for the religious significance of existentialism, its irrationalist premise is regarded as an approach to

[1] J.-P. Sartre, *L'existentialisme est un humanisme,* p. 37.
[2] Joseph M. Bochenski, *Logik der Religion,* Köln, 1968, S. 25-26.

religion that transforms the religious problem into one of the central points of philosophical inquiry in general. *De profundis,* from the depth of human despair, alienation, loneliness, abandonment, there rises the call to God, to religion. Not for nothing do the existentialists and their religious "critics" so often quote the words of the 129th psalm: "Out of the depths have I cried onto thee, O Lord."[1] And indeed religion, that universal basis for the consolation and justification of this world of vicissitude (Marx), finds no difficulty in redeeming the hopeless despair of the existentialist.

The "concept of compensation" offers opportunities for bringing together and integrating different philosophical trends. Their influence is clearly felt in the statements made by bourgeois philosophers at philosophical congresses, where the opposition between the scientific philosophy of Marxism and the whole idealist line in the philosophy of our day shows itself with great clarity. In one of the main papers read at the XVth World Congress of Philosophy (Varna, 1973) the Swiss philosopher and physicist André Mercier, General Secretary of the International Federation of Philosophical Societies, proposed the thesis that philosophy is not science, science is not philosophy, and the philosophy of science is neither philosophy nor science. Having divided intellectual activity into science, art, morality and contemplation (to be understood as a religious mystical principle), he perceived in philosophy "a way of life that is simultaneously critical and fully committed by responsibility and by love. In this sense it is an integral logic but in addition also an existential link, an epistemological dialectic and ontological dynamic".[2] Thus positivism, existentialism and, through "contemplation", religion are united in a new, "living" understanding of philosophy. It is not difficult to see this as an attempt to deny the scientific nature of philosophy by turning it into a supposedly "higher" integral relationship of man to the world.

But denial of the scientific nature of philosophy, based in its turn on the conversion of science itself into a narrow empirical concern with particulars, indicates essentially the reduction of philosophy to the level of an arbitrary "philosophising", beside which there may be placed other forms that are just as arbitrary (plurality) and just as "legitimate". Thus the "unity" of philosophy is realised in a pluralism of philosophical systems opposed to the

[1] See, for example, the study by the neo-Thomist Jakob Hommes of Heidegger's philosophy in his book *Krise der Freiheit. Hegel-Marx-Heidegger,* Friedrich Pustet Verlag, Reigensburg, 1958, Kap. II, S. 189-262.

[2] André Mercier, "La philosophie et la science", *Proceedings of the XVth World Congress of Philosophy,* Vol. 1, Sofia, 1973, pp. 25, 30.

scientific phlilosophy of Marxism-Leninism.

The increasingly obvious profound crisis of the "classical" forms of neo-positivism, existentialism, and neo-Thomist "metaphysics" does not dispose of the fact that only on their basis can one understand the current regrouping and reorientation of the main trends in contemporary bourgeois philosophy. Suffice it to note the intrinsic similarity between neo-positivism, on the one hand, and structuralism and "critical rationalism" that are replacing it, on the other, or the similarity between existentialism and "hermeneutics" as a theory of how statements may be "understood" or enterpreted in such a way as to reveal unstated or even deliberately hidden meanings.

Although the tendency for differing, sometimes diametrically opposed philosophical conceptions to reveal a certain unity is common enough in the bourgeois thought of recent times there can be no doubt that not one of the philosophical systems of contemporary idealism or any of their latest versions, or all of them taken together give any convincing answer to the questions presented to philosophy by social development, the practical experience of the class struggle and social revolution, and the progress of science and technology.

Chapter XXII

CONTEMPORARY BOURGEOIS SOCIOLOGY

Contemporary bourgeois sociology presents us with a multiplicity of schools and trends that perform a dual function. On the one hand, they provide an ideological defence of capitalism, an attempt to answer, from the bourgeois standpoint, the questions concerning the structure of society, its essence, and the driving forces and prospects of social development; on the other hand, they seek to furnish a certain amount of empirical knowledge that is needed for the practical management of the activities of capitalist enterprises and groups.

The empirical researches of bourgeois sociology have yielded a mass of factual material, evolved technical methods of studying various sectors and aspects of social life, and conducted surveys and observations that are of a certain scientific interest. But, taken as a whole, bourgeois theories of society, their basic principles and general theoretical conclusions have no genuine scientific basis. The point is that the bourgeoisie is not interested today in objective knowledge of the laws and fundamental driving forces of social life because the main trends of social development indicate the need to do away with capitalist society.

In present-day non-Marxist sociology there are certain groups of scientists who are in varying degrees aware of the depravity and inhumanity of many aspects of bourgeois reality.

But it is not these scientists who shape the image of contemporary bourgeois sociological theory. Its most typical representatives are sociologists who, despite their claims to strict objectivity and being above parties, ideological neutrality and independence of politics, elaborate and defend doctrines that give theoretical grounds for the policy of the ruling bourgeoisie of the imperialist states.

Bourgeois social thought today is in a state of profound crisis inasmuch as its most important theoretical and political generalisations do not pass the test of history. It is therefore compelled to manoeuvre constantly, to substitute one idea for another, which is then proved by life to be as unstable and short-lived as its predecessor.

According to the level of theoretical generalisation attained,

contemporary bourgeois doctrines on society may be divided into three large groups, although we must not, of course, forget that the dividing lines between them are somewhat relative. The first group consists of conceptions that attempt to take in the universal features of social life and to formulate all-embracing principles and laws of history. These most abstract social doctrines constitute the *modern bourgeois philosophy of history.* The second group includes *sociological theories proper,* oriented not on building systems of world history but on considering social phenomena, mostly those that are inherent in capitalist society. In the third group we find numerous schools and groups that are concerned with the description and elementary classification of social phenomena in narrow, local sectors of bourgeois society. These studies comprise *modern bourgeois empirical sociology.*

1. The Bourgeios Philosophy of History

The bourgeois philosophy of history is today, as it was in the past, concerned with the universal principles and methods applicable to the whole of history.

The task of discovering the most general features of social development, the driving forces of history taken as a whole is, of course, a real problem.

In the 18th century, and the first decades of the 19th, such major figures in the philosophy of history as Montesquieu, Voltaire, Condorcet, Herder and Hegel reflected the outlook of the rising bourgeoisie, which was interested in obtaining knowledge of historical phenomena. The speculative conceptions and systems of these thinkers, therefore, contained brilliant ideas and conjectures concerning historical necessity, the law-governed character of social development, social progress, and so on.

In the 1830s the old philosophy of history was attacked by positivist sociology, whose founders (Comte and later Spencer) and their followers made out a case for concrete, positive knowledge of society and rejected abstract historical systems divorced from empirical facts. Although the advocates of positivist sociology had no intention of renouncing idealist general sociological conceptions, the empirical turn taken by bourgeois social studies could not fail to weaken the positions of the philosophy of history.

The present-day bourgeois philosophy of history has relinquished the rational, progressive ideas of the past. It usually avoids generalising the actual historical process and builds its conceptions by exaggerating or absolutising various aspects of reality. This distorts the

actual picture of social development, its driving forces and its prospects.

Many exponents of the bourgeois philosophy of history, including sociologists, prefer not to display their idealist credo. They propose that we should stand "above" both materialism and idealism, they reject the monist explanation of history and for the most part uphold a pluralistic view of social life, that is to say, consider the various factors that interact in the historical process as equal and independent principles.

In an age when the role of economic relations has made itself felt with such force and clarity the bourgeois philosophy of history and bourgeois sociololgy are compelled to acknowledge them. But they see them as only one of the factors, among many others, that condition social life. At the same time all their arguments about those factors being independent and of equal value do not prevent bourgeois philosophers and sociologists from subordinating in one form or another the rise and development of objective economic relations to the spiritual origin.

Elevation of an intellectual élite and belittlement of the role of the masses have always served and continue to serve as the basis for the idealist interpretation of history. The exponents of historical idealism see in the merits or shortcomings of this élite, in its strength or weakness, its intelligence or mistakes, its courage or cowardice, the ultimate foundations of the movement of history, the causes of all major historical events.

In addition to *idealism* another important feature of present-day bourgeois theories of society is *denial of the law-governed character* of social development. To the Marxist idea of the necessary, law-governed transition from one social-economic formation to another bourgeois social thought for the most part counterposes the idea of *indeterminism* in the historical process, which they see as a merely accidental connection of individual, unique facts and situations. Defending this view of history Herbert A. L. Fisher wrote in *A History of Europe:* "I can see only one emergency following upon another as wave follows upon wave, only one great fact with respect to which, since it is unique, there can be no generalizations, only one safe rule for the historian: that he should recognize in the development of human destinies the play of the contingent and unforeseen."[1]

The old neo-Kantian counterposing of nature and society, the first being declared the realm of blind necessity and the second the

[1] Herbert A. L. Fisher, *A History of Europe,* Vol. 1, Eyre and Spottiswoode, London, 1935, p.VII.

sphere of freedom, is accepted as a matter of course by many contemporery philosophers, sociologists and historians of the subjectivist school.

The methodological positions of the bourgeois philosophy of history are considerably influenced by *irrationalism.* The views of the German philosopher Wilhelm Dilthey are by no means unimportant in this field. Dilthey regarded history as an irrational stream of events without structure or laws. There was no point in seeking these non-existent social laws and trying to explain historical facts on their basis. History, said Dilthey, was not to be explained but understood. The process of understanding was a process of experience. The task of the historian was to relive as "adequately" as possible the experiences of the people who made history and to describe these experiences. Liberated from objective laws, history thus became largely a matter of descriptive psychology.

Denial of the law-governed character of social development is connected with denial of the possibility of knowing social phenomena, of discovering their essence *(agnosticism).* If everything in history is individual and unique, what line is the historian, the sociologist or the economist to take? Not explanation, but merely the description, ordering, classification of empirical facts, the appraisal of these facts from the standpoint of their moral value (neo-Kantianism) or on the basis of the thoughts and ideas of the historian himself. The idea that history is mainly the concern of the mind and imagination of those who write history is extremely popular in bourgeois historiography.

Thus, agnosticism in social theory has an inner connection with such features of the bourgeois world outlook in the epoch of imperialism as irrationalism, alogism and intuitionism.

Many contemporary bourgeois philosophers and historians absolutise the specific features and difficulties of cognising the historical process. Every historian, some of them believe, expresses not only his own point of view but also the positions of the social group to which he belongs. But from this correct proposition mistaken conclusions are drawn concerning the impossibility of objective, generally significant historical knowledge. They circumvent the fact that the ideologists of the progressive classes, not to mention those of the working class, have been able within the limits of their age to reflect objective historical truth.

Denying the possibility of objective historical knowledge, a considerable number of contemporary bourgeois ideologists take up arms against scientific foresight, and particularly against Marxist scientific prediction. This does not, however, prevent sociologists from making their own predictions—of what they would like to see

in the future. Such "predictions" include the assertion that the two types of "industrial society", capitalism and socialism, must inevitably converge, or rather that socialism must be swallowed up by capitalism.

An important feature of contemporary bourgeois theories of society is the *metaphysical, anti-dialectical* approach to social development, and renunciation of the principle of the historism of social objects in their equilibrium. In dealing with social phenomena the tendency is to ignore their internal contradictions, the struggle between these contradictions, the dialectical negation of the old by the new, the leap-like transitions of quantitative into qualitative change, and the revolutionary transformation of the old into the new.

Of course, it is quite justifiable to study this or that social system in its relative constant and stable state. But when this relative stability is turned into an absolute, when the social organism is lifted out of the stream of time, and its development is totally ignored, the truth and depth of social knowledge are lost. The consideration of any group of social relations in isolation, as something static, naturally rules out all possibility of discovering the essence of these relations, the true laws of their existence and functioning. The bankruptcy of this approach is particularly obvious today, when social reality is torn by the profound and irreconcilable contradictions between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, between the systems of socialism and capitalism.

The work of the British historian Arnold Toynbee, who wrote *A Study of History,* enjoys considerable popularity in the West. One of Toynbee's initial propositions is denial of the unity of the historical process. In his own inimitable form he develops the idea of Spengler, who in the spirit of medieval nominalism, denying the objective existence of general concepts, maintained that "'mankind' is an empty word", and that only individual ethnico-cultural communities actually exist. According to Toynbee, history is the history of different isolated civilisations, which arose, developed and disappeared without making any appreciable impact on one another. But what force conditions the movement of civilisation, its rise and development? Such a force is the intellectual élite, the thinking and creative minority, leading the "inert majority", which lacks the reason and will to engage in independent historical creativity. Thus, Toynbee, like many other exponents of bourgeois social thought, replaces the concept of the social-economic formation by the category of civilisation, the core of which is the spiritual principle, the creative urge, the totality of specific cultural values. Material production in these idealist systems figures at best as one

of the factors of social life, one of the components of civilisation.

In his desire to grasp the specific qualitative features of different civilisations Toynbee tries to make an absolute of these differences and erase the connection between them. He thus denies the law-governed nature of the global, internally connected, progressively developing history of humanity and human culture. Toynbee's conception denies the existence of this universal history, tries to atomise it, to break it down into non-communicating civilisations, to exclude the idea of historical progress as a general social law.

Another major exponent of contemporary bourgeois social thought is the American sociologist Pitirim A. Sorokin.

Whereas Toynbee operates with the concept of "civilisation", the focus of Sorokin's doctrine is the theory of *socio-cultural systems.* These he understands as super-organic social, cultural phenomena, which unlike physico-chemical and physico-biological phenomena are endowed with meaning and possess a value or standard. If we ignore the meaning, the value of the Venus of Milo, writes Sorokin, it becomes nothing but a piece of marble of a certain geometrical shape. Sorokin also uses the concept of the "supersystem", which includes a large number of cultures based on general ideological principles. Human history is the consecutive replacement of one supersystem by another. The difference between supersystems, according to Sorokin, is determined by what they consider to be value, how they define its nature and what type of world outlook is accordingly taken as their basis (spiritual, integral-idealist, or sensualist).

The purpose of the supersystem in Sorokin's conception is to oust the concept of the social-economic formation. It is not hard to see, however, that the attempt to embrace real history with artificial supersystems, built on various forms of human cognitive activity, does not get social science very far. It is still not explained what the real forces are that engender the supersystems, what causes their replacement, and what are the laws of human history.

Sorokin devotes considerable space in his work to denying the possibility of scientific knowledge of the future. He maintains that the principle of indeterminism, which in his view has triumphed in the physics of the microcosm, if transposed to history, makes it possible to overthrow the idea of objective laws in historical development and at the same time the possibility of scientific prediction, based on recognition of the causal connection of social processes and phenomena. "This creative dynamism of human history, alone, makes the prediction of important historical events almost

impossible."[1] However, indeterminism is a belief held by only a relatively insignificant number of physicists. The once current idea of the "free will" of the electron and similar notions have today been renounced by many serious investigators of the microcosm. So, Sorokin's attempts to use the idealist aberrations of some natural scientists in order to dispose of social prediction are unconvincing.

The contemporary bourgeois philosophy of history provides various definitions of the stages, or epochs, in the historical development of mankind, but its exponents are united in their desire to ignore the problem of the prospects of social development, particularly the replacement of class society by a society without classes. Real historical development, which is leading mankind to socialism and communism, is making nonsense of abstract super-historical constructions—hence the crisis in the contemporary bourgeois philosophy of history.

2. Contemporary Bourgeois Sociological Theories

Apologetics for capitalism is a characteristic feature of many contemporary bourgeois sociological theories. Even when noting certain negative aspects of capitalist society, they pursue the aim of proving the "naturalness" and "viability" of private-property relations and thus justifying them.

The old traditional schools of bourgeois sociology—organic, psychological, geographical, etc.—are still current today but have undergone considerable modifications in adapting themselves to the new conditions of the ideological struggle. New schools and trends, predominantly neopositivist, have also taken root. There is a fashion for theories that reduce sociology to the study of group and individual behaviour with the help of psychoanalysis.

The theory of the "industrial society" and the "post-industrial society", of "convergence" of the two systems, etc., are widespread in bourgeois society. These theories are usually based on the conceptions of "technological determinism".

The term "technological determinism" is used to denote bourgeois theories that particularly emphasise the role of the productive forces, the role of technology in social development, while ignoring the economic relations, the relations of production. This view is prominently defended in W. W. Rostow's book *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto.*

[1] Pitirim A. Sorokin, *Fads and Foibles in Modern Sociology and Related Sciences,* Henry Regnery Company, Chicago, 1965, p. 258.

Rostow's attempt to consider the historical process, its main stages, in their dependence on the level of development of the productive forces is symptomatic. It testifies to a certain reflection of the Marxist conception of social development in contemporary bourgeois sociological thought.[1] But this apparent objective consideration by certain bourgeois sociologists of the achievements of Marxist sociological thought, particularly the economic doctrine of Karl Marx, conceals a denial of Marxism as a whole, of its dialectical method, and its fundamental assessments and conclusions. Rostow, for instance, hastens to warn his readers that, unlike Marx, he does not regard social production as the foundation of the social structure. He writes: "...Although the stages-of-growth are an economic way of looking at whole societies, they in no sense imply that the worlds of politics, social organization, and of culture are a mere superstructure built upon and derived uniquely from the economy."[2]

For the cause-effect connections between the economy and social-political relations Rostow tries to substitute mere interaction or functional connection. At the same time his arguments concerning the interaction of material and non-material factors, their equal value, end with the admission that the incentives of economic development are people's "inner needs", human knowledge, desires, passions, etc. So the emphasis on the role of the productive forces culminates in a thinly disguised idealism as an explanation of the historical process.

If production relations are ignored, it is possible to present capitalism and socialism as varieties of the "single industrial society". On the artificial and frail foundation of "technological determinism" rests the theory of "convergence", which has become extremely popular in bourgeois circles today. According to this theory, industrial development leads to the convergence of capitalism and socialism, to their merging and to the damping down and disappearance of the struggle of opposing ideologies. Moreover, it is assumed that the present-day scientific and technological revolution will by itself, without a class struggle, create an abundance of goods for all, gradually solve all social problems and abolish classes and class antagonisms.

The advocates of the theory of the "single industrial society" take such phenomena that are common to both capitalism and

[1] This is also true of other theoreticians of the "industrial society" and the "post-industrial society", who try to turn the scientific and technological revolution, considered abstractly, into the demonic force of modern history.

[2] W. W. Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1960, p. 2.

socialism as industrial production, similar organisational methods, the role of science, urbanisation, etc., and ignore the most essential thing which distinguishes socialism from capitalism—public ownership of the means of production, the absence of exploitation, the existence of a state power that is the power of the whole people.

Close study of the theories of the "single industrial society" and "convergence" shows that their defenders are interested not so much in convergence, in bringing socialism and capitalism closer together, as in the gradual absorption of socialism by capitalism.

A number of bourgeois sociologists and economists now defend the idea that industrial society in its capitalist and socialist versions is to be replaced by the "post-industrial society". In a paper read at the VIIth International Congress of Sociology in Varna the American sociologist Daniel Bell tried to present the "post-industrial society" as something that already exists. If we are to believe his assurances, the "post-industrial society" began to take shape in the United States in the post-war years. This society, in the opinion of its theoreticians, is characterised first and foremost by super-powerful equipment ousting man and human labour from production, by "intellectual technology", by the highest incomes, and by the scientific and technical intelligentsia or rather its upper crust, or élite, playing the guiding role in society and the state. On closer inspection it becomes clear that the "post-industrial society" is essentially only another variety of capitalism with preservation of the state-monopoly and other forms of private ownership and domination of the super-powerful capitalist monopolies, and other attributes of developed capitalism.

Many bourgeois sociological theories distort the essence of state-monopoly capitalism and try to present the process of "depersonalisation" of capitalist ownership, the emergence and development of state-monopoly ownership as the disappearance of capitalists and capitalism itself.

This can be seen particularly clearly from the example of one of the trends of the technocratic theory, whose main spokesmen are T. Veblen, author of the books *Engineers and the Price System* and *The Absentee Ownership and Business Enterprise in Recent Times,* and J. Burnham, *The Managerial Revolution.* These writers declare that in the United States a "peaceful revolution" has taken place; this revolution is expressed in the fact that the owners of capital have ceased to control it, having conceded this function to the managers. If such arguments mean anything, they point above all to the parasitic nature of the ruling class in contemporary bourgeois society, which has largely ceased to fulfil any socially useful functions in the process of production and exchange. The fact that to

a certain degree there has been a division of property and transference of the direct management of production to the managers by no means signifies the disappearance of capitalist ownership, the power of the capitalists and their corporations and the domination of such a collective capitalist as the bourgeois state. In reality state-monopoly ownership, the combined ownership of the most powerful strata of the ruling bourgeois class and its state, fully preserves its exploitative nature since it is still based on the same appropriation of the results of the surplus labour of millions of hired workers.

Thus the separation of the productive forces, technology from the relations of production has become a methodological device for distorting the picture of social development in general and capitalist society in particular.

All these theories which seek to prove that contemporary capitalism has ceased to be capitalism are subordinated to one end—denial of any justification for a socialist revolution, of the need for the revolutionary transformation of capitalist society into socialist society.

Some bourgeois theoreticians try to argue the proposition that everyone can become prosperous without the destruction of the capitalist economic system in the process of a social revolution, by focussing attention on social mobility, on the movement of individuals from one stratum of society to another. A similar interpretation of social mobility is also used to proclaim contemporary bourgeois society almost a "classless society", where the rigid barriers between various classes and social groups have allegedly been destroyed. But the existence of millions of hereditary proletarians, of a reserve army of unemployed, of impassable race barriers, cliquishness, nationalistic and religious prejudices, which continue to survive in the most developed capitalist states, offer an eloquent rebuff to this notion.

Besides openly apologetic theories of modern capitalism bourgeois sociology produces theories whose apologetic aspect is not so obvious. But these theories still perform definite ideological functions, their purpose being to set up against the Marxist theory their own interpretation of the driving forces and mechanism of society.

Besides direct denial of historical determinism, denial of the law-governed character of historical development, we also find in bourgeois sociology recognition of the existence of laws of social development in certain narrow sectors of social life.

The American sociologist Alex Inkeles, for instance, declares that the prospect for a scientific sociology rests not only on the

argument that social events are recurrent but also on the belief that they are regular or "lawful".[1] Inkeles hastens to warn us about the narrow frame of action of these laws: "Sociologists have abandoned the search for a single, all-encompassing theory of change. Instead, they seek to deal with change more concretely, one might say more realistically...."[2]

At the same time there do arise in bourgeois sociology conceptions claiming to express some of the more general law-governed connections. Thus we find all kinds of "laws" of the transformation of capitalism, "laws" of the convergence of antagonistic social-economic systems, laws of social action, and so on.

The acknowledgement of determinism in contemporary bourgeois sociology concerns only phenomena that do not directly threaten the fundamental interests of the bourgeoisie—technological progress and modifications of social relationships within the framework of the bourgeois system; at the same time it precludes the determinism, the objective necessity of the revolutionary struggle between classes which leads to the replacement of social-economic formations.

The theory of "social action", evolved by the American sociologist Talcott Parsons and his associates, occupies an important place in contemporary bourgeois sociology. It claims to point the way towards a complete general theory of "social behaviour", an "all-embracing" theoretical system of sociology.

The theory of "social action" expresses the main orientation of bourgeois sociology—to discover the methods and means by which the individual would "accept" reality, in other words, succumb to it, become better adapted to capitalist relations. The theory reduces the whole system of social relations to four components: actor, goal, means and situation. In their simplest form these elements are restricted only by the first and the last. In effect, this theory substitutes for the real relationships between people in society their ideas about these relationships. The functioning of a social system is said to be a matter of one person's expectations coinciding with those of another. Social relations are reduced to the subjective psychological and moral attitude of one person to another.

Furthermore, the individual is regarded largely in isolation from his objective connection with a class, a collective, etc. The wealth of human relations inherent in real society is replaced by sets of relations between individuals.

[1] See Alex Inkeles, *What Is Sociology?*, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1964, p. 95.
[2] Ibid., p. 88.

Thus the theory of "social action", in effect, ignores the most important fact that people's actions are determined by their objective place in the totality of social relations, and above all in the system of production relations.

The theory seeks to solve major social problems not by changing objective reality—the economy, social-political life—but by changing only the subjective aspect—the views, ideas, feelings of individuals. The states of "balance", "stabilisation" and "order" are regarded as paramount in the "social system". Any social system, writes Parsons, "rests on the functional need for order".[1] The maintenance of "order" in social relations is to be effected by social control designed to safeguard society from undesirable deviations and upheavals.

The development of the theory of "social action" in bourgeois sociology has popularised *structural-functional analysis,* which has become almost the leading method of research in contemporary bourgeois sociology.

Structure and function are in themselves inseparable elements of every social system, every social organism. The dialectical method, as was pointed out by Lenin, compels us "...to regard society as a living organism in its functioning and development...".[2] According to Marxist theory, each "system of production relations is a specific social organism, whose inception, functioning, and transition to a higher form, conversion into another social organism, are governed by specific laws".[3] As the main categories of the structure of society historical materialism singles out the concepts of the productive forces and relations, basis and superstructure, etc.

From the standpoint of Parsons, Merton and other bourgeois sociologists the basic components of the social system are values, standards, roles and institutions. The functioning of these structural elements is supposed to form the content of the development of the society. It boils down to the interrelationship between the individual consciousness and the social consciousness—the system of culture embodied in the sum total of standards, roles and institutions. The mechanism for adapting the individual to the existing, given standards and norms, that is to say, the mechanism for his socialisation, thus turns out to be the main object of research in bourgeois sociology.

[1] *Toward a General Theory of Action,* Edit. by T. Parsons and E. A. Shils, Harvard University Press, Cambridge (Mass.), 1951, p. 175.

[2] V. I. Lenin, *What the "Friends of the People" Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats,* Vol. 1, p. 189.

[3] V. I. Lenin, *The Economic Content of Narodism and the Criticism of It in Mr. Struve's Book,* Vol. 1, p. 410.

In the first case we have a materialist structural-functional approach to social life; in the second, the approach is in effect idealist. As Parsons himself once wrote, it is a matter of such controversies as "economic or interest explanations versus explanations in terms of ideas or values".[1]

Marxism-Leninism regards the structural-functional approach as one of the most essential elements in scientific methodology, but it does not make an absolute of it, does not turn it into the only method of analysing social phenomena. Besides the processes of functioning it singles out the processes of inception and development, and the conversion of one social system into another. In bourgeois sociology the structural-functional method becomes, in effect, the chief instrument of analysis of the social whole and the interconnection between its components. Its class orientation is to justify the "integrity" and "stability", the equilibrium of the system of capitalist social relations. For this reason Parsons and his followers concentrate only on those mechanisms of social regulation that can support and preserve the social system in its given "normal state". Thus we have in a carefully disguised form a tendency to defend capitalist social relations. But in an age of dynamic social change, of the collapse of obsolete social orders, in an age of revolutionary transformation, the static, absolutised structural-functional analysis has revealed its total inadequacy. Many of its supporters have begun to appeal to the principle of development, but they understand development itself as vulgar evolutionism. The historical situation has also compelled bourgeois sociologists to develop a "theory of conflicts", which is spearheaded against the Marxist-Leninist theory of class antagonisms and struggle. The supporters of "conflict theory" have tried to reduce class, socio-political contradictions to "psychological confrontation" between representatives of various social strata. All these new trends in contemporary bourgeois sociological theory were clearly discernible in many of the papers read by bourgeois thinkers at the International Congress of Sociology in Toronto (1974). These papers showed that bourgeois sociology is making feverish attempts to find new arguments in defence of the doomed bourgeois order.

3. Bourgeois Empirical Sociology

The bourgeois sociological theories that evolved the apparatus of structural-functional analysis have promoted a broad growth of

[1] *Theories of Society*, Edit. By Talcott Parsons a.o., The Free Press of Glencoe, New York, 1961, Vol. 1, p. 72.

specific empirical studies designed to reveal the behaviour of individuals and small groups.

At the same time the development of empirical sociology has been encouraged and stimulated mainly by the practical needs of the functioning of the capitalist social system. The desire to achieve a rational organisation of production and ensure maximum profit has compelled the bourgeoisie to employ a vast army of sociologists studying questions of the organisation of production, labour relations and so on. In order to strengthen control over all social life the bourgeoisie has begun to act upon the information and practical advice provided by sociologists on ways of influencing people's behaviour, preventing revolutionary outbursts and so on.

These applied, specialised disciplines made their first appearance in American sociology at the turn of the century. The sociologist-philosopher with his generalised systems was superseded by the empirical sociologist whose interests and horizons were limited to the strictly defined and narrow sphere of sociology. The number of sociologists employed by capitalist monopolies and governments and carrying out their direct orders began to grow, as did the number of departments of sociology in colleges and universities. According to American sociologists, this branch of science had by 1948 reached a stage in which systematisation has been gradually but almost completely replaced by specialisation, even in the narrow sphere of description and analysis.

Specialisation in bourgeois sociology increased as concrete quantitative methods of empirical observation on the basis of the methodology of positivism were evolved. These were the methods of polls, interviews, surveys, comparison, data processing, selection of facts with the help of various scales, tables, etc.

Studies of the concrete methods of empirical sociological analysis also began to appear. First in this field was the joint study by the sociologist Florian Znaniecki and the social psychologist William Thomas, *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* (1918 to 1920), which gave a detailed account of the methods of studying personal papers, selected cases and similar empirical methods. The books by Robert Park and Ernest Burgess, written in the 1920s, developed a set of research methods that later were to serve bourgeois sociologists as a model for concrete sociological studies. The American sociologist Paul Lazarsfeld worked out the "latent structure", that is to say, the technique of processing quantitative data presented in the form of different factors. The sociologist J. E. Lundberg devoted considerable attention to verifying the methods of quantitative data processing with the help of various measurements, statistics, etc.

Contemporary bourgeois empirical sociology has dozens of specialised branches. Chief among these are the sociology of social change, social institutes, social disorganisation, social control, social structure, social stratification, social mobility, the élite, social collectives, human relations, industrial sociology, political sociology, the sociology of public opinion, social psychology, the sociology of religion, and the sociology of war and peace.

Each of these branches contains dozens of other sub-divisions. For example, urban sociology includes town planning, urbanisation and planning, and urban ecology. The sociology of personality studies such questions as the personality and culture, social factors in the development and conflicts of the personality, sociological and psychological factors influencing the personality, and the social psychology of the personality.

An important branch is the sociology of social problems, dealing with such aspects of the development of capitalist society as industrial and ethnic relations, education, social planning, and war and peace. The object of such research is for the most part to offer practical advice on how to "improve" the situation, that is to say, attempts to buffer the contradictions of capitalist reality.

Industrial and factory sociology performs the practical task of helping capitalist business. The first studies in industrial sociology appeared between 1910 and 1920, but its most vigorous development was in the 1930s, after the world economic crisis of 1929 to 1933. Bourgeois sociologists set about studying the activity of people employed in production, the forms of their relationships at capitalist enterprises, particularly the interrelations between management and workers, and place and role of trade unions at factories. Hundreds of sociologists are at present employed in this field, and many of them work directly in production as "consultants", "experts", and "advisers". Their aim is to "adjust" and "regulate" relations between the worker, on the one hand, and the boss or manager, on the other, so as to achieve a growth in output and a corresponding increase in profit for the capitalist. They study questions of stimuli and psychology of labour, the training of workers, the prospects of developing workers' skill along with the growth of industry, the interrelations between workers and supervisors, between trade unions and the management, the problems of unemployment and its influence on production, etc. Factory sociology (founded and popularised by Elton Mayo) is one of the varieties of industrial sociology.

The investigations carried out by industrial and factory sociologists coincide in some respects with the problems of the sociology of "human relations" although this field is not limited to industy. It

studies the interrelationship between people in various fields of labour, tying them in with the wider sphere of social relations.

The problems of group life figure prominently in bourgeois sociology. Bourgeois sociologists refer to the fact that all human life is group life; everywhere people live in association with other people. But instead of revealing the causes that compel people to live in groups, instead of singling out among all the manifold human relations the decisive relations of production, bourgeois sociologists confine themselves to describing various aspects of group life. The problem of small groups of people (who have direct relations with one another) is studied by sociometry. The founder of this discipline was J. L. Moreno, who expounded his conception in the book *Sociometry*. He formulates his programme as follows: "Instead of analyzing social classes composed of millions of people, we are making painstaking analyses of small groups of persons. It is a retreat from the social universe to its atomic structure."[1] Sociometry is an example of the unsuccessful attempts of bourgeois sociologists to "overcome" the class conflicts of capitalist society by improving psychological relations within small groups and transposing this microclimate of people who are "sympathetic" to one another, to society as a whole.

Bourgeois empirical studies have certain general features.

First, they are extremely narrow and limited in character because they usually rely on the polling of small groups.

Second, as a rule they are superficial, lacking any power of penetration into the essence of things. Description instead of explanation is a characteristic feature of research in specialised fields of sociology. The American sociologist Arthur Davis rightly observes: "From the professional literature on social problems, then, we can readily learn how Jack Doe happened to become a delinquent in his youth, but we will learn much less about the deeper relations of juvenile delinquency to the social structure as a whole. Why does delinquency persist in our society, what interests does it serve, what frustrations does it relieve? Such questions tend to be avoided in academic treatments of social problems...."[2]

Empirical studies are frequently highly subjective. On the one hand, they see the ultimate explanation of the facts under consideration in man's social behaviour, in socio-psychological phenomena. On the other, any interpretations, including "economic"

[1] J. L. Moreno, *Sociometry. Experimental Method and the Science of Society*, Beacon House Inc., New York, 1951, p. 25.

[2] Arthur K. Davis, "Social Theory and Social Problems", in: *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, New York, December 1957, Vol. 18, No. 2, p. 197.

interpretations, are mostly based on the opinions derived from polling.

The narrow empiricism of concrete studies in bourgeois sociology, the minute splitting up of their research targets, the superficial factual description, etc., have been sharply criticised even by bourgeois theoretical sociologists, such as Pitirim Sorokin, Robert Merton, Paul Lazarsfeld, and others. Speaking at the 4th International Congress of Sociology, Rober Merton observed that sociologists were busily engaged in studying trivial problems while everything that concerned the really significant issues of human society was left unstudied. Despite the fact that wars, exploitation and poverty poisoned people's lives and that of society or threatened their very existence, many sociologists devoted themselves to problems that were so far removed from these catastrophic phenomena as to be irresponsibly petty.

But the appeal for a scientific sociology organically synthesising theory and empirical analysis and therefore capable of presenting a true picture of social life, its main stages and prospects of development cannot be realised because of the class position of bourgeois sociology, its limited methodological approach.

Bourgeois sociology, both theoretical and empirical, is in no condition to provide an integrated scientific picture of society and its development, or consistent scientific analysis of the individual aspects of capitalist reality. In present-day conditions the crisis of bourgeois sociology is also expressed in the fact that it is compelled to reflect in various forms the adaptation of capitalism to the new situation, to employ social demagogy and preach the ideas of "modernisation", "growth", and "development".

But the intricate problems of modern times cannot be solved without precise scientific knowledge of society and social development. Such knowledge is provided by Marxist-Leninist philosophy and sociology.

At the same time Marxist sociologists do not ignore the wealth of factual material gathered by bourgeois empirical sociology in studying separate aspects and phenomena of capitalist society; they take into consideration its carefully elaborated techniques and methods.

The development of concrete social studies on the basis of the theory and method of historical materialism constitutes one of the essential tasks facing Marxist sociologists. These concrete social (and also sociological) researches are intended to enrich Marxist sociology and historical materialism and by their conclusions help in the practical construction of communist society.

CONCLUSION

We have considered the fundamental problems of Marxist-Leninist philosophy—dialectical and historical materialism. Now let us draw some conclusions.

1. Marxist philosophy was brought into being by the fundamental needs of the revolutionary struggle of the working class, whose goal is to put an end to the system of capitalist relations and build classless communist society. It has become a powerful theoretical instrument of scientific cognition and the revolutionary transformation of the world.

Marxism was the necessary result of all previous development of progressive social thought. Marxist philosophy critically digested everything of value that had been achieved by philosophy, by social consciousness, in more than two thousand years of their development.

2. Marxist philosophy, developed and enriched by Lenin on the basis of new historical experience and the new achievements of science, played an outstanding role in the theoretical, ideological preparation for and victory of the socialist revolution in Russia and other countries. Materialist dialectics, which is the heart and soul of the Marxist-Leninist doctrine, was and is a well-tested instrument for the analysis of social development. It helps to reveal the inner contradictions of the present epoch, contemporary economic, socio-political and intellectual processes and to work out a scientifically based strategy and tactics for the Marxist-Leninist parties, who are leading the struggle of the working people against the forces of imperialism.

Armed with materialist dialectics, the Marxist-Leninist parties of the socialist countries trace the general laws and specific features of social development in the conditions of socialism, the specific nature of the interrelations between friendly classes and nations, the actual dialectics of the transition from socialism to communism. Knowledge of the laws of socialist and communist construction helps to reveal the decisive links in the chain of historical development, to mobilise the masses and make a timely choice of the most flexible and effective forms and methods of directing the country's economic, political and cultural life at the

given historical stage.

Marxist-Leninist philosophy is highly significant in the contemporary ideological struggle. Opposing the ideology of imperialism, it holds high the banner of social progress, of genuine and effective humanism, of profound faith in a bright future for mankind, in the great creative possibilities of progressive human thought.

3. The philosophy of Marxism-Leninism is a specific form of the scientific cognition of the world. Resting on the achievements of science and summing up the development of the world-historical practice of mankind, it produces a dynamically developing picture of the world and plays its part as a generalised scientific philosophical world outlook. It supplements many specific methods of the specialised sciences with a general philosophical method, which is equally applicable and necessary to all branches of knowledge, and arms them with basic methodological principles of research. Dialectical-materialist philosophy points the way for science to a more profound knowledge of the world; it places no limits on human knowledge, absolutises none of the achievements of science and proves the necessity of discovering more and more new aspects and laws of the environing world.

Finally, Marxist philosophy and sociology afford an opportunity of penetrating deeper into the essence and meaning of the current revolution in science and technology, and show its various social consequences in the conditions of capitalism and socialism.

4. In the philosophy of Marxism-Leninism strict objectivity and scientific rigour are combined with partisanship. The revolutionary progressive aims which it upholds allow it to be quite open in revealing its own class nature, its own partisanship, in contrast to contemporary bourgeois philosophy which is compelled to masquerade under slogans of "non-partisanship" and being "above class". Marxist-Leninist philosophy continues the traditions of the militant materialism of the past with its intolerance of all kinds of prejudice. It fights openly and consistently against all varieties of religious-idealist, metaphysical distortion of the picture of the world, against the defence and perpetuation of obsolete social-economic and political systems. It attracts to the struggle all the advanced thinkers of the capitalist countries, who feel grave anxiety for the future of the peoples, for the fate of the world and mankind.

5. A most important principle of Marxism-Leninism is the bonding of theory and practice, the testing of theoretical propositions in practice, the development of theory on the basis of generalisation of practical experience. This makes Marxism a living, creative doctrine, implacably opposed to any stagnation of thought, intellectual conservatism or dogmatism. "There can

be no dogmatism where the supreme and sole criterion of a doctrine is its conformity to the actual process of social and economic development...."[1] Marxist-Leninist philosophy provides no ready-made solutions either for social practice as a whole or for any separate branch of scientific knowledge. It demands the concrete application of its propositions, taking into account the specific features of what is being investigated.

Since it is incompatible with dogmatism, the philosophy of Marxism-Leninism also renounces revisionism. The latter, while posing as creative development of Marxist theory, discards the fundamental truths of Marxist-Leninist teaching on the basic laws of the class struggle in the capitalist countries, the socialist revolution and socialist construction, and substitutes subjectivism or bourgeois objectivism for the objective dialectical-materialist analysis of social phenomena.

The global struggle between the forces of capitalism and socialism and the attempts of revisionists of all hues to emasculate the revolutionary teaching and distort the practice of socialist and communist construction require of the Communist parties that they increase attention to the problems and creative development of theory. Criticism of bourgeois and revisionist attacks on the theory and practice of socialism becomes much more convincing when it is founded on the active and creative development of Marxist-Leninist theory.

6. The creative application of Marxist-Leninist theory demands that it should be thoroughly understood. "...Socialism," wrote Engels, "since it has become a science, demands that it be pursued as a science, that is, that it be studied."[2] The same applies to all the other components of Marxism-Leninism, and particularly dialectical and historical materialism. One cannot become a fully conscious, convinced Communist without studying Marxist philosophy. This was what Lenin taught.

[1] V. I. Lenin, *What the "Friends of the People" Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats*, Vol. 1, p. 298.

[2] F. Engels, Preface to "The Peasant War in Germany", in: K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 170.